TWELVE MONTHS IN AN ARMY HOSPITAL

BY A NURSE WHO DIDN'T GO ACROSS

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"Nurses are born—not made."
See page 15.

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FOREWORD

It is with no pretention to literary merit, but simply a brief record of one person's experiences combined with a few quotations and remarks, during twelve months spent among our sick boys, at an Army hospital in the U. S. A., that I attempt, at the oft repeated request of a few friends, to write these notes, taken partly from letters written at that time, but mostly from incidents which recur to my mind after a period of two years and over.

Some may object to a tone of lightness found in these notes, and to that I would say that the desire to avoid making them appear cheerless and gloomy, coming as they do from the saddest of scenes, an Army hospital, has to some extent, produced too much the opposite color, to those who have never experienced the sharp contrasts of the tragic and comic in such a life. With the desire to sow at least some good seed along the way, even tho' hand in hand with what might appear like lev-

ity as found in some portions of the little book, I hope may not argue the fact of a proper reverence for holy things, either a lack of appreciation of the comic wherever it appeared. A wise preacher has said, that "A merry heart doeth good as a medicine" and one found this proverb amply verified by the beneficial effect upon a ward of sick men which a good laugh produced.

The boys took to a good joke like a duck to water, so along with the pills, moral lectures and general army orders, went wherever possible a little merriment as a variation from the other treatments. If this little book should meet with any favor whatever from the public I can only regret that it is not more worthy of such a kind reception.

It has suited my fancy, to substitute names of persons and places in these notes, with the exception of a few of the towns.

T. E. L.

CHAPTER I

Just a Plain Nurse

do not know that a sufficiently large number of persons will care to read about the doings of a nurse while trying to do her bit to help along the success of the World War, to make it worth while writing about, but for some time, by the urgent request of some friends, and by the aid of the inconvenient little voice which is always goading people to the performance of disagreeable duties, I have decided to try to do my best toward setting down on paper, a few of the happenings which occurred during that time.

After a lapse of several months I suppose it will be somewhat difficult to recall many interesting events, and had I but jotted down a few notes, as they happened all thru those months, it would be much easier to write an interesting account of the work there at this time.

I am of the opinion that one should have a worthy object in view before attempt-

ing anything, and it is with a wish to portray to the friends and relatives of our soldier boys, a picture so clear that they may see as we nurses saw, how their boys felt, tho't, acted, and were treated, while away in training, for I believe if there was any one set of individuals who were permitted to see the inside workings of the life of those boys while in the army hospital it was that humble, but necessary adjunct to a Base Hospital, The Red Cross Nurse.

I wish all America could have seen how bravely and patiently our boys bore the hardships of camp life. for, tho they were still in our own country, there were hardships, and plenty of them, and many and varied were the occasions to call forth acts of heroism, not all of which were enacted upon battle-field or in the trenches.

I fear no one but a nurse will appreciate what it means to find a whole ward, containing forty or fifty suffering men, first night post operative patients, having had, not even the minimum dose of an opiate, but not a groan, a moan, or murmur, of any sort,—but that is part of my story!

I entered the Red Cross nursing service in the early part of the year 1917, which

saw me in our Capital City doing private nursing. I had gone there to take the State Board examination, and finding so many congenial spirits in the nursing world there, I just stayed. I had a room and boarded at the Central Registry which was run by a nurse, Miss Raber, a lady of very fine character and high aspirations. I found it a great pleasure on many occasions, to listen to her talk as she was a woman whose knowledge was far reaching in all branches of nursing work, and having attended many of the National conventions, was up to the minute on all subjects pertaining to our work, as well as being a woman of kindly nature, very much interested in everything that was uplifting, and would go to no end of trouble to help those who were in need, if she could. She was very highly thought of by those who gathered around her, but could on occasion be very severe should any nurse happen to fall below the high standard with which she expected all "her nurses," as she called them, to conduct themselves.

I went about with her a great deal that summer when "off duty" to church, on shopping expeditions, to visit the Base Hospital at Camp D——, which was in

process of construction, a short distance from the city. I found her a most congenial, pleasant, and agreeable companion upon these occasions, and I grew very fond of her. Tho' she was at all times jovial and merry, there was always a certain reserve, which rare characters possess, which recalls a paragraph of Emerson's Essays, which says that we do not get near enough to become thoroughly acquainted, but seem to nod to one another from our respective peaks, (as it were). I always had some such feeling about my friend Miss R——, and felt just a little in awe of her.

There were some two hundred nurses, from various states, staying here at this time. The Central Registry was indeed the center of nursing activities of the city, as well as I may say, also of the State. For it was necessary for all nurses upon graduation from their hospital anywhere in the state, to come to the Capital City to take the State examination, whereupon p a s s i n g successfully, they eventually found their way to the Registry, and finding such a congenial wholesome atmosphere about the place, decided, if any rooms were available, to make it their permanent abode, for awhile at least, as I

had done. Groups of nurses would be found in living-room, parlor or on the veranda, talking of current events, but more often of the War, and happenings in connection with it. It was inevitable that nurses would be called too, and there were some rumors afloat to the effect that nurses were to be conscripted the same as the soldiers.

We tho't, most of us, that it would be a great disgrace to the nursing profession, should the nurses neglect to voluntarily offer their services, thereby incurring the humiliating danger of being compelled to go. There were many gatherings of a social nature among the nurses that summer, one I will mention in particular.

I had come in from a case in the country, one afternoon late in May, and found the nurses who were "in" some dozen or more, in a furor of excitement, in anticipation of a dinner, which was to be given the nurses that evening, by the State Nursing organization, at a tea room on the 7th floor of one of the finest department stores in the city. It was to be in honor of a nurse, who had been recalled by the Red Cross Organization, from a Base Hospital in the west, to prepare to be sent overseas.

Miss Bois, the nurse in question, was at that moment, right under our very roof. All the nurses who happened to be "in" that evening, were given a ticket and an invitation. This was a very brilliant and enjoyable affair. There were about fifty nurses present, all the bright and shining lights in the nursing world of our particular State were there, and the speeches, toasts and repartee, were very instructive as well as entertaining. Out of the large number of nurses who roomed at the Registry, comparatively few took their meals there, and we who did, had a chance to become quite well acquainted. Miss Bois stayed here while preparing to go to France, and upon close acquaintance, she appeared to be just the right sort of person to be sent over. Strong, physically perfect, a woman of fine character, old enough to be sensible, kind-hearted, sympathetic, her whole heart in the work, and if many a mother's son does not bless the day the A. E. F. sent such a nurse across, then I'll "miss my guess."

Of course, we who were staying behind, were glad for her good luck, while we envied her early departure, but contented ourselves with the thought that we would join her there ere long. But when the

Armistice was signed, I was still here, but was so glad the horrible war was ended, that I was only too willing to forego the exciting experiences overseas. I was at the Registry upon that memorable evening, while sitting with a group of nurses upon the veranda, when the newsboy's cry of "Extra—War declared on Germany" made our hearts stop beating and our lips pale. Eagerly we scanned the sheet which proved that it was no idle farce, that the country was to call its brave sons ere long to go forth to bleed and die, if necessary, for the cause of right and justice. It seemed a very sad day to have come to, here in our own beautiful free America.

I resolved there and then, to go and nurse the soldiers, little dreaming thru what sloughs of despond, in the shape of delays, hindrances, of one kind and another, and entanglements of "Government Red Tape" one would have to wade, ere the resolve came true.

First a letter to Washington for general information as to the procedure of entering Red Cross work. While waiting word from Washington, a letter to the "Alma Mater" for indorsement, credentials, etc. In the meantime examinations moral, mental and physical, sundry dosages of

typhoid, para-typhoid, and smallpox antitoxin and vaccine. A somewhat lengthy delay in hearing from my hospital, causing all sorts of vague speculations, as to the cause.

Every thoughtless deed and action, which our hapless natures had perpetrated throughout the three years hospital training, was no doubt being reviewed by that august facluty, and woe to that poor luckless damsel who could not present, if not an entirely spotless career, one at least passably exemplary. Never in all those "uncertain-as-to-what-may-befall-you" years in training, had the Superintendent wielded such a weapon as was in her power for influence at this time. Even some of the doctors must add their approval or disapproval, as the case might be. I wondered if in some reckless unguarded moment of vexation I had spoken my mind too freely in an unflattering manner to some of the doctors, incurring their wrath and life-long prejudice perhaps. If such be the case, then my "blood was upon my own head." Retribution had overtaken me at last.

A long tedious day in any hospital crowded with harassing duties, is not at all times conductive to that evenness of temperament and kindliness of disposi-

tion, the author had in mind who wrote that "Nurses are born, not made," "and what impels a woman to become a nurse is the eternal instinct of motherliness, the compassion for suffering, and when that grace is born very big in a woman, the idea of caring for the sick, entices her irresistably." This is all very beautiful, and it was with s o m e such exalted thoughts that I had entered upon my profession, and I thought then and do yet, that the medical profession likewise when followed in the proper spirit, is a continual source of moral satisfaction and happiness to the generous heart, for its aim is to alleviate human suffering, and lengthen out human existence. Its ambition is to gladden as well as to prolong human life, by warding off disease as the greatest of mortal evils, and restoring health and at times reason itself as the greatest of mortal blessings.

But during the toilsome days of training, amid the numerous cares and responsibilities, the rush to get on duty on time causing one to neglect the most important of all duties, that of "buckling on the whole armor," thru prayer soliciting our Heavenly Father's aid to withstand the wiles of the Devil, and keep that throughout the day which we have committed to

Him, without which preparation for each day's battle, one is so apt to forget the noble end in the trying means, and when weary and overburdened with numerous cares, it is so easy to get it into one's head that one is being put upon, that the doctor was more exacting and tyranical than necessary, that the head nurse was cross and unjust, or the janitor too stupid, or some one or a thousand of the grievances one can always hatch up if they do not persistently rely upon that admonition of our dear Lord and Master, to "let not the heart be troubled."

I waited, patiently as I could, busy most of the time, on cases either in town or in the country for a word of commendation from my school. On occasions off duty, I would learn of meetings being held among the nursing lights, disbanded again, and still no word from my home hospital. Spring faded and summer waned, and at length just as I was about giving up all hope of ever being accounted worthy of having my name sent to Washington as a candidate for the high honor and exalted privilege of nursing "sick America," I encountered Miss Raber in the hall one day early in the fall, which set my heart aflutter with anticipation and hope.

CHAPTER II

A Red Cross Nurse

AS Miss Raber who on occasion wears a very severe "front" outwardly, belying the kindliness of nature beneath, bore down upon me, and brought up directly in front of me with an air of something of unusual importance in her manner, my thoughts flew every way like panic stricken rabbits. I knew that whatever my fate was to be, I was at last to find out. I had been so anxious to be a Red Cross Nurse, to go and nurse the sick soldiers back to health so they could go and win the war, I had been working so hard, and was so anxious to hear a commendable word from my "Alma Mater" who no doubt had been so busy with the multiplicity of demands upon an institution of that kind, had probably pigeonholed my request until some more convenient time, or perhaps were weighing me in the balance and finding we wanting! Oh! Why had I let the golden days of op-

portunity slip, when I might have gone out of my way, and been extra nice to everybody connected ever so remotely with that venerable seat of learning?

Why! Oh! Why? had I not frankly spoken out words conveying the respect, and admiration I secretly cherished for all those high and mighty ones connected with it, but foolishly keeping such talent hid "under a bushel" when it might have been proclaimed from the housetops, and thereby have won a grain or two of charity with which I found myself in such dire need at this momentous time!

Thoughts like these flew confusedly thru my mind in less time that it takes to tell it.

They say a drowning person will see a whole lifetime pass in review in a moment just at the last, and like one of these tragic persons, I felt that this was the moment in which I was called upon to give up, if not my life, a cherished scheme which had taken quite an important place in my plans. I think the years of my hospital life passed in that brief moment of suspense, as I tried to recall the worst, most ominous of deeds or misdeeds. Before I could get my thoughts mobilized into any kind of semblance to order, Miss

Raber spoke, and the words with which she greeted me, showed me that I had been courting misfortune needlessly, had been pursuing disaster when it was trying its best to evade me. She said, "Your hospital has been heard from, and your credentials are good!—very good!" I drew a long breath of relief as I gave myself a mental slap for my needless worries, and resolved thenceforth to consider myself a care-free young woman with plain sailing before her, for as I believed, the worst of my difficulties were over. My name had already been sent to the War Department she said, as an eligible candidate for the R. C. Nursing Service, and in little more than a week, I received a large official looking envelope, containing sundry information, rules and regulations, also a questionnaire which I was to fill out and return, which I did in short order, and awaited the consequences. Before hearing from the War Department again, I was called upon a case about one hundred miles from the city to a village in the northern part of the state. I was here about three weeks, when one day I received a message by phone, from the Red Cross Secretary at D., saying my orders had arrived from Washington, and that I must be ready to leave the following day

for goodness knows where, away down south in the "land of cotton."

Now I am usually a decorously behaved young lady, and though I felt like doing the "fisher's hornpipe" in the center of the floor just then, need not argue to the contrary. I kept my feelings, also my feet under control however, and sedately enough informed the family that I would have to go. My patient was by this time convalescent, and entered as did all the members of the family into the spirit of the affair, with as much ardor as if I had been the favorite son preparing to go away to war. I had many lovely letters from this home later, which comforted, cheered and amused me, amid the busy scenes of hospital life in the Army.

But here I was one-hundred miles from the city, which having reached, would have a hundred and one odds and ends of small affairs to attend to, which would all take time, like changing my transportation into a ticket, see to procuring a berth, get dresses from laundry, telegraph my darling folks, and "proceed without delay" upon the 3rd of December, and this was the 2nd!

In making a prognosis of the whole affair, I decided that my venerable uncle was decidedly unreasonable, and had asked

the impossible. And I forthwith resolved that if the welfare of the southern portion of the American Army depended upon my movements, it would have to wait until I could get a convenient start, and I proceeded to wire the powers at Washington to that effect. I got a stern and curt order in reply, to "proceed at once!"

With vague surmisings of what the outcome might be, should I begin my quarreling with my most respected Uncle at the outset, but with resolutions undaunted I firmly stuck to my resolve, that if the Southern Base Hospital had gotten along so far without my valuable assistance, it would in all probability survive twenty-four hours longer, thus enabling me to get my breath and my bearings, to say nothing about getting to town, cramming a few things into trunk and bag, securing my ticket and berth and reading over my traveling orders, etc., etc. I found my blessed sister awaiting me when I arrived at the Registry. She had come like a dear good angel with a pile of bran new white uniforms to see me off before embarking upon war work herself which was to take her to the National Capital later. I had not seen my dear s i s t e r for several months, and it was a glad as well as a sad meeting between us, for we knew not how

much longer this dreadful war might separate us.

Taking a cab upon alighting from the train at D., I flew thru the December slush to the Registry as if the Huns were after me, where, like many another recruit, I burst in among the nurses, and my waiting sister with the announcement: "I've enlisted, and am off to the Army." My sister spent the night with me, and was to accompany me all the way back toward the town of Keokuk which seemed very comforting. We spent the next day together, trotting about the city streets until nine o'clock, shopping and doing all those last errands which I fear no woman would even go to Heaven without attempting if she could.

Even with the whole day I had pilfered from "Uncle Sam" I hadn't time to pack systematically, but threw things into my trunk, sat on the lid to make it go down, had the baggageman rope it, and we were off.

A December twilight amid falling snow is not the most cheering time to embark upon a somewhat perilous enterprise, and but for the presence of Ruth I fear I might have added a drop or two of the "briny" to the native moisture of the "town I left behind me."

CHAPTER III

On the Road

OF our departure from the Registry which had been my home for the past eight months, there remains in my mind a blurred impression of handshaking, embraces, wildly waving handkerchiefs, and a comic picture of Hepzabah the cook, "flapping" her arms on the doorstep.

Ruth and I spent half the night waiting in an out-of-the-way station, somewhere between D— and B—, for the thru train to St. Louis, fully intending to keep awake as a sort of vigil, appropriate to the occasion, but along toward midnight I fell asleep in spite of myself and the uncomfortable chair and had propitious dreams, until awakened by a loud masculine voice proclaiming that the train C B & Q for St. Louis was on the track outside. It was seven o'clock next morning when the train pulled into B, and a bright day smiled upon my undertaking. Ruth and I en-

joyed our breakfast together on the train, in spite of the fact that the next stop would be the town of K—, where she would leave me and we had but a few moments more together, they being taken up with giving messages for the dear ones whom I should not see ere leaving. So amid good-byes, caresses, embraces and admonitions to write soon and often, we bade each other farewell.

How empty the train seemed after she had gone. We waved as long as the slow moving train permitted a glimpse of each other, and at this juncture "I took the veil" and what I did behind it was, as Nurse Pemberton would say "Nobody's business."

But I contend that the soldier who cries when his mother says good-bye, is the boy to fight best and die bravest, and when the time comes, to go back to her better than he went.

I was spinning along southward at the rate of sixty miles an hour, and would have enjoyed every moment but for the thought that every turn of the wheels was taking me farther from those I loved.

Meanwhile the head beneath the purple be-tasseled hat, fermented with all sorts of heroic thoughts and high purposes to

do or die, perhaps both, and the heart under the big checked coat was very tender with thoughts of the loved ones I was leaving behind and had no way of telling when I would ever see them again.

I have made it a habit throughout life, upon setting out upon any new undertaking, to invoke the Divine guidance and blessing upon my endeavors, and I believe, as one of our famous writers have said, that one should never have one's heart so set upon any one scheme, to the extent that one would not as readily do something else if it were the Lord's will, else it becomes a wrong. Many times I fail miserably in being the blessing I long to be in whatever corner of this old world I find myself, and at times I find it necessary to upbraid myself most severely on self examination, at the little done towards the great end proposed at the beginning of each New Year. For I resolve upon reading a portion of the Bible each night and morning, as well as offering up prayer each morn and at eve, also many times thru the day, for that Divine guidance and help without which it is impossible to please God. I reason that if Christ, our elder brother, who was sinless and without guile, found it imperative to spend the

whole nights in prayer, how presumptuous for weak human mortals to claim to be His followers, without that humble dependence for help from Him, which He showed toward His Father. In spite of the urgent prayer of my heart continually to God to keep me from a vain and overbearing spirit, I fear I do many vain, foolish and selfish things, but with the hope and faith in Him to yet rid me entirely, of all ignorance, weakness and sin for His Name's Sake, I trust that He will do it.

Settling myself in my seat, I read my traveling orders and my assignment to duty, which read something like this: "With the approval of the Secretary of War, Tola Ellen Lee, of the town of D, in the State of Iowa, Reserve Nurse, Army Nurses Corps, is hereby assigned to active service in the Military establishment, and will enter upon her duties after taking the oath prescribed by Section 1757 of the Revised Statutes of the United States," which was duly signed by Bert W. Caldwell, Major M. R. C., U. S. Army.

I read another paper also signed by Major Caldwell, which stated that, Reserve Nurse, Tola Ellen Lee, was hereby authorized to proceed without delay to United States Army Base Hospital,

Camp B— in the state of L— near the town of A—. Well here I was proceeding without much delay, I thought as I collected my various small articles together, preparatory to getting settled for a six hours ride before changing trains. I inspected my ticket which my thoughtful, generous Uncle Sam had considerately provided me with, and for which I was very grateful, relieving me of the necessity of wasting my substance on railroad companies, when perhaps the boys might need "even a spinster's mite," while thoughts of the scant remuneration which was allotted to nurses serving in the Army was conducive toward husbanding what resources I had in hand, as far as it was possible.

I look much at my traveling orders, for I have a feeling that if I keep that straight in my mind I won't go far wrong. "I sort out my tickets, and put them in every conceivable place that they may be get-atable, and I finish by losing them entirely. Suffer agonies until a compassionate neighbor pokes them out from between the seat and back with a toothpick, put them in the innermost corner of my purse, and that in the deepest recess of my pocket, pile a collection of miscellaneous articles on top and pin up the whole. Just

get composed, feeling that I had done my best to keep them safely, when the conductor appears and I'm forced to rout them all out again, exposing my precautions and getting into a flutter at keeping the man waiting."

A whole company of soldier boys who had boarded the train in a northern state, and filled several coaches ahead (I heard the porter tell a gentleman in the seat next mine) and were bound for an Army camp farther south, kept the air lively with patriotic songs. There were some splendid voices among them, and their music helped to make the hours fly past quickly for all the passengers, as well as themselves.

I had sent a message by telegraph from D— before leaving, to a friend in St. L., and when the train pulled into the station she greeted me with her usual cheery smile and hearty embrace, took me out to her lovely home and delightfully beguiled what would have otherwise proven a long tedious wait at the station. After a delicious dinner, my friends accompanied me to the train, and with many good byes, I once more take up my journey alone. Circumstances are such in these days that to travel very far in a sleeper, one does

not stay alone. There are always nice persons sociably inclined, and having heard "complaints of the absurd way in which American women become images of petrified propriety if addressed by a stranger when traveling alone, a sort of inborn perversity of nature caused me to assume an entirely opposite style of deportment, and finding a companion hails from somewhere in Missouri where one of my classmates was from, and was acquainted with several of the fifty-seven cousins of Molly's, I put my bashfulness into my pocket and plunge into a long discussion on the war, weather, music, Dickens, sleighing, skating, ouija-boards, and the immortality of the soul."

Shortly after leaving St. L. I fell in with a most delightful couple, a gentleman and lady, somewhere in the sixties I should judge, whose berth was directly opposite mine across the aisle. The lady whose name was Mrs. Stone had shared my seat while the porter arranged hers for the night. As soon as she learned that I was a nurse bound for a camp hospital, she became very much interested in me seemingly, and at the first opportunity introduced her husband to me. It was evident that they were people of culture and re-

finement, as well as persons of means. She was dressed very plainly as well as quietly, in the best of taste, as all really genteel folks are prone to do when traveling. Her dress of black silk was covered by a black cloak—plain but of rich material. She wore a neat small black hat which was very becoming to her sweet face framed in soft gray hair.

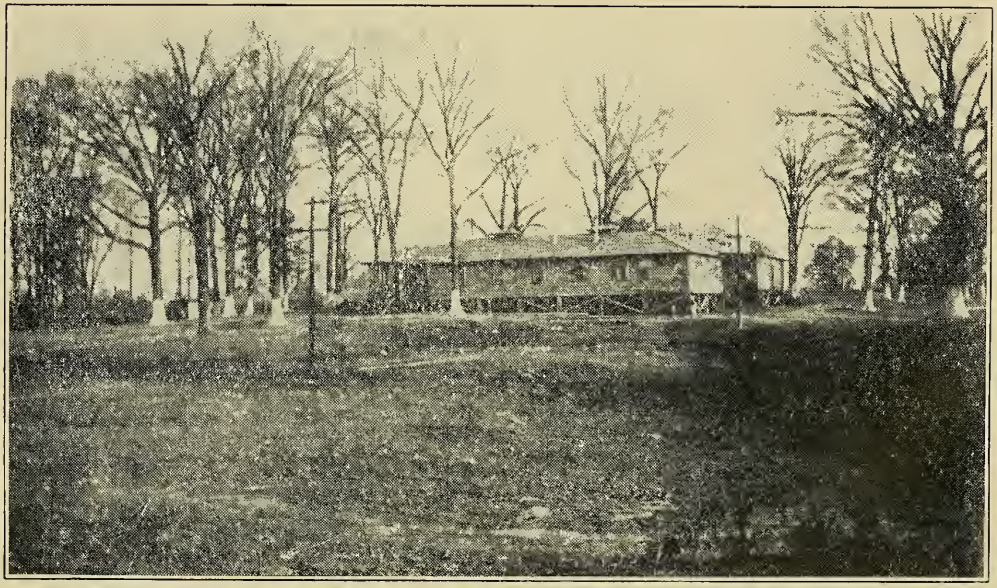
In some way she made me think of my own dear mother so long away, and it is not strange that I enjoyed every moment of their society. Mr. Stone, a man of large stature, hair quite gray, a good strong face, just the kind of man that has a way of making everyone feel perfectly comfortable and at ease in his company. They were returning to their home in the south, from Battle Creek, Michigan, where they had accompanied their daughter who had remained as a patient in a sanitarium there. Having become attached to the nurses there, they were more interested in all nurses and their work than they might otherwise have been. We traveled together pleasantly, taking our meals together, and sitting together at other times, Mr. Stone attending to all checking of baggage, etc., until we separated in a southern city, where they had to take a

different train to their home. It was while eating our breakfast in a cafe adjoining the station at this place that a portly, fine looking gentleman came toward our table. As he did so, Mr. Stone arose, greeted him cordially and shook the extended hand of the distinguished gentleman most heartily. After the newcomer had gone thru the same cordial greeting with Mrs. Stone and exchanged a few words of kindly solicitation in regard to their health and welfare, as well as that of their daughter then at Battle Creek, his eyes turned in my direction. Mrs. Stone promptly gave an introduction. O u r distinguished friend proved to be no other than Governor B— of the state of A—. In introducing me, Mrs. Stone had explained my mission as well as destination, adding that they had taken me "under their wing," and were only too sorry they could not accompany me to the camp, as he knew a very much loved stepson was then an officer at the camp toward which I was going. The Governor shook my hand heartily as he expressed a very deep interest in the camp in L—, as he said the troops there were made up largely of boys from his own state. After bidding them good bye with many good wishes, and a word of God's speed to me as he shook my hand again

at parting, he was gone. It seemed the Governor had been a most intimate friend of Mr. Stone's family, and had at one time cherished a particular regard for the daughter who was then a patient in a sanitarium in Michigan, whom it seems had been a classmate at college.

I felt very lonely after I had parted from these genial folks. As they told me good bye, they gave me a bit of pasteboard which was to serve as a card of introduction to the stepson at Camp B—, who was then a Lieutenant Colonel in the A— Reserves, and whom they seemed most desirous that I should meet. I am sorry to say that I never made myself known to that honorable gentleman, though many times later I heard him spoken of as a man of sterling worth. Officers and men alike, those who knew him well, held a very high regard for him. Before I left the hospital I heard of his promotion to the rank of a Colonelcy.

I had left D— in a raging snow storm, had traveled but a couple of days and nights, and here I found myself in a land where flowers were in bloom outside in gardens. The air was warm and balmy, just like the first days of spring at home. I had not expected to find such a notice-



A family of bear or porcupine could find quite comfortable quarters under there. See page 59.

able difference in the climate quite so soon.

The country through which we were passing did not seem so very unlike that I had left, except that it was more level and less wintry. I suppose in summertime the wide fields would have shown me new sights, and the wayside hedges, blossomed with new flowers. Now everything was sere and sodden, and a general air of shiftlessness prevailed which would have caused a northern farmer much disgust, and a strong desire to "get a hustle on," and right up things.

Dingy little houses with chimneys built outside, stood in barren looking fields, with cow, mule or pig lounging near the door. We passed many colored people looking as if they had come out of a picture book, or off the stage, but not at all like the sort of people I'd been accustomed to see at the north.

CHAPTER IV

A Pleasant Encounter

WHEN I entered the parlor car at L— R— upon the last lap of my journey, I spied in one end of the car a writing desk containing pen, ink, blotter, etc. I hastily scribbled off a few postals to friends and relatives, before the train should start, paid a boy to mail them, then settled myself in one of the comfortable easy chairs, and g a v e myself up to thoughts of what I should do when the train pulled into the station at A—, and I found my journey at an end.

By instructions received before leaving, I had wired the camp hospital at my last stop, so there would be someone to meet me when I should arrive, so there was nothing now to do but to sit and watch the southern fields fly past, and as there was yet a whole day on the train I had plenty of time to think upon the work I was about entering upon. I had been all thru the Base Hospital at Camp D— which was

near my home, had talked with many of the nurses on duty there, and in view of this fact, it is rather funny that I should seem to have a feeling that I was the only nurse going to this camp hospital in the south. I do not know if I had formed any idea, as to how I was going to run it all by myself or not, for just then my attention was attracted by a most capable looking young person carrying a suitcase in one hand. Something in the way she managed that suitcase, as tho' from much familiarity it had become as it were, a part of herself, proclaimed her, to my mental consciousness to be a traveling nurse. She was in the act of speaking to another young lady who had a self-sufficient, world-wise air about her which seemed strangely familiar. I had never laid eyes upon either of them before, but my first convictions were right, for they were, both of them nurses, I thought without a shade of doubt and perhaps bound for the same destination as myself. As I watched them I noticed the younger of the two, who was still standing, incline her head in my direction, and I overheard the remark, "If I am not mistaken, that is another one over there." Just then a third young woman came from somewhere farther down the car with a smiling face and out-

stretched hand, saying as she came nearer the two first mentioned, "I believe I belong to this family?" That she was one of our sisterhood was plain for a Red Cross Badge adorned her coat. This was too much for me to stay in obscurity longer, so with the words "and I too," I joined the group and we had a hearty laugh together for introduction, from sheer gladness of spirit, at finding other members of our fraternity in the same "boat" with ourselves, and bound for the same hospital. We became old acquaintances on the spot, as all nurses wherever they meet, seem to feel an understanding of each other that makes it impossible to remain strangers in each other's society. These three were all from different states, one coming from Minnesota, one from Pennsylvania, and the other from Michigan. Only one out of the four eventually getting to France, Miss Rollins, the one from Minnesota going over with the first unit called from our Base. Miss Keating was too old, and Miss Yates, I have heard, went back to her institutional work after the war. For myself, I always found too much to do here in the United States to leave, until the war was over, and then it was too late to go. To say that we four enjoyed the remainder of the trip is put-

ting it mildly. We felt what we were, a happy family. We dined together, talked together, sat together, and wherever the train stopped long enough, we alighted and took kodak pictures of the quaint scenes and objects along the way. Not one of us had ever been so far south before, and the quaint and comical rural scenes and sights along the route brought forth bursts of merriment and laughter many times.

Miss Rollins observed that we need not feel alarmed any more, if we should find all our hair falling out, as she perceived that hair switches grew on trees in the south. And indeed the cypress trees with the fine feathery, hair-like foliage, which hanging from their branches, could be likened to nothing more appropriate than hair switches.

At a town near a lumber camp, a Red Cross car was standing on the switch, and as our engine had to take on water, we had quite a long wait here. We alighted to the ground and while walking about, the Lieutenant in charge of the Red Cross car, seeing by our badges that we were nurses, tho't we might find an inspection of his car interesting.

I had not worn my Red Cross pin until

joining the other nurses, and, as we laughingly said, having the weight of each other's society to back us we had donned the emblem of our trade, which the Government had forwarded us along with our other official property. This Lieutenant who was an M. D. was in the Government employ. His field the whole country wherever there were lumber camps, saw mills and large crowds of working men. His duties were to demonstrate and teach first aid principles to the men.

The car was tastefully equipped with all necessary articles pertaining to Red Cross first aid work, and we found it very interesting. Besides his supplies, this young doctor also carried a puppy dog, for he was but a boy, but his talk and demonstration of the work he had in hand was very entertaining. He was a pleasant, affable young person, and upon our leaving his car he wished us much good luck and hoped he would see us in France later, as he hoped to go over himself as soon as he had finished the work he was now doing.

A long hot afternoon on a train thru the south is not the most exciting theme for a story, but though it was December and we were attired in woolen dresses, the air was warm as though we might have

been transplanted into some tropical clime in the middle of July. We found it rather amusing to watch the cotton bedecked chimneys, in fact everything seemed to be decorated in cotton. I suppose the wind had blown it from some of the numerous bales we saw, and lodging on any projecting obstacle, looked as though the country had gone to decorating thus early for Christmas, and was bent on making Santa Clauses out of everything. Even the fences and fence posts did not escape but were resplendent in festoons of white downy cotton.

Miss Yates burst into laughter as she pointed to an aged negro man, who being hatless, showed his head to be covered with the same mode of decoration, but in this instance, it was wool instead of cotton.

As night came on, there was nothing to be seen outside but darkness made visible, and nothing inside but every variety of bunch into which the human form could be "rolled, twisted or massed."

Every man's legs sprawled drowsily, every woman's head (but we four) nods till it finally settles on somebody's shoulder. Children fret, lovers whisper, old folks snore, and somebody privately imbibes

brandy. The penetrating perfume rouses the multitude causing some to start up like war horses at the smell of powder. When more lights are turned on everyone sniffs wry-facedly, looks inquiringly at his neighbor. Everyone but a stout gentleman, who, with hands folded upon his broadcloth rotundity, sleeps on impressively. Had he been innocent, he would have waked up, for to slumber in that babe-like manner, with a car full of giggling, staring, sniffing humanity, was simply preposterous.

Public suspicion was down on him at once. I doubt if the appearance of a flask with a label would have settled the matter more effectively than did the over-dignified and profound repose of this short-sighted being. His moral necktie, virtuous boots, and pious attitude availed him nothing, and it was well he kept his eyes shut, for "Humbug," twinkled at him from every light, window-pane, and human eye around him.

It was long past midnight when our train pulled into the town of A—, and even at that untoward hour one could feel that it was a big dirty, shippy, shiftless place, full of goats, geese and negroes to judge from the depot. Upon inquiring we

found that no one had come to meet us, so we decided to call up the camp hospital and find out what they wanted us to do. Being a part of the Army now, we felt it our duty to wait for further orders before making any move. Miss Rollins emerged from the telephone booth with the information that there was no place at the hospital for us, as an influx of nurses had filled all the rooms, but that they would have accommodations for us by the next day; meanwhile there was a conveyance on the way in to take us to the hotel, where we were to stay until further orders from the camp. In a short while our conveyance arrived; a big lumbersome ambulance, one of the kind used in bringing the sick boys from the camp, a distance of two miles, to the hospital. The boy driving this vehicle was a New England chap from Vermont, who had come with a unit of hospital corps men to the camp some months earlier. As it was somewhat of a new experience to ride in an Army ambulance truck, he helped us to get settled with our bags under our feet, and upon arriving at the hotel, he turned spokesman for the crowd, for which we were duly grateful, as we were very tired after our long journey on the train. We were ushered into a large lobby filled with a

promiscuous gathering of officers, corporals, sergeants, civilians and spittoons. The last mentioned articles deserve honorable mention from the immensity of their size! I had a vague uneasiness lest in my sleepy condition I should fall head first into one of them! They were of brass, highly polished, and were as large as a small sized family washtub. By dint of a long and forceful argument, by our spokesman (we four in the meanwhile fearing lest we were going to be compelled to spend the night on the street) for the hotel was so crowded, were finally given four cots which were to be placed in the Italian Ballroom. Thanking the soldier who had brought us hither, and so valiantly fought for our night's lodging, we piled into the elevator and were whisked up to our very (slick underfoot) but much bedraped boudoir for our first night's repose under southern skies. Tired as we were and travel stained and weary, we each treated ourselves to the luxury of a tub, and though we may not say we were welcomed by drums beating, we slept with the colors flying above us, and the stars and stripes of Old Glory doing guard duty over our couches.

CHAPTER V

A Wet Reception

FEELING ourselves an Army squad already, we were up at reveille the next morning, and making as elaborate a toilet as the place permitted, hastened to the lower floor, lest a reception committee from the Base Hospital be awaiting us there. But no one having been here, we made ourselves as comfortable as possible in the ladies waiting room, until odors of bacon and coffee drew us to the dining room in quest of some breakfast. Afterward a long wait in the parlor upstairs writing letters and cards to folks at home, watching the clock and occasionally peeping over the mezzanine railing in the direction of the office downstairs, or watching the door leading to the hotel entrance, and otherwise on the alert for signs of any promising looking individual coming for us. But it was beginning to look as though they had forgotten all about us, until long past noon upon inquir-

ing at the office we learned that someone had called for four nurses in the morning, and we, having neglected to register as **nurses** the night before, the clerk did not know that we were the four nurses in question, and consequently told them that there was no such party here! Now here was a quandary. And not being familiar enough at that time with Army Hospital Rules to know whether or not we should all be shot at sunrise, we spent an uncomfortable hour following, nevertheless keeping our nerve, we bravely telephoned the hospital again, therewith obtaining the comforting information that there would be a conveyance at the hotel for us about four p. m. We amused ourselves by watching delegates of a Red Cross State Convention, which was being held in our bower of the night before, at this hotel. That it was an interesting sight to we four who had never before had the opportunity of studying a congregation of southern people, goes without saying. The characteristic accent, the slow drawl and peculiar inflection of the southern voice, was altogether novel and fascinating. They all wore the little white button with red cross in the center, emblem of one of the most noble fraternities that ever existed.

As a party of three ladies passed our chairs, I was attracted by one in the party who stopped and unceremoniously gazed at me, not looking at my face, but as it appeared my person. I wondered if something was out of plumb, and questioned my companions, to learn that as far as they could see I was all right. After a few moments this same woman coming back thru the room, came toward my chair. She was dressed rather conspicuously in a loud toned silk, with many decorations in the way of earrings and jewelry of various pieces. Her color was too vivid to be natural, and it was plain to be seen that she was a woman of fashion. She addressed me with these words: "Pahdon me, but may I ask wheah you got youh pin?" I am afraid I stared at her rather impolitely for a second, not just getting her meaning. Then motioning toward my Red Cross badge she resumed: "Youah pin is so different from the otha's, and I like it so much, I should like to get one like it." "Oh! yes, my pin," I stammered. Then it dawned upon me that she had taken me for a delegate also, and admiring the pin I wore decided she would have one like it, learning where I had purchased it. I did not explain to her how it had taken three of the longest years of

my life, likewise many and various examinations, and no end of waitings and relinquishments to obtain that small disc of gold and enamel,—but instead I laughingly remarked that I was only a nurse, and this was my Red Cross pin.

"Oh! she said, I thought I had nevah seen any just like that," and thereupon she plunged into a long catechism of how long had we been in the work, where were we from, how long since we left home, were there many sick soldiers, and ending by asking how we liked the work.

From all appearances we never were going to have the opportunity of finding out the answer to her last query for ourselves, but I answered her in one breath by saying that we had just arrived the night before and were awaiting our conveyance to the Base Hospital five miles away, which would be here at four to take us out. She wished us very good luck, was glad she had met us, hoped we would meet again and moved on toward the elevator to join her companions at the convention upstairs in the ballroom.

It was pouring rain when at four-thirty the ambulance drove up to the front entrance of the hotel. We loaded ourselves in, with suitcase and bags, and started for

the Base Hospital. There were some three or four nurses inside, who, having a half day off duty, had come in to the city to do a little shopping, one of whom told us that she had been at the camp a month, and this was her first trip to the city in that time. I do not believe anyone present upon that trip will ever forget it. The distance from town to the Base was about five miles over the worst roads imaginable. They had been recently cut out of pure clay since the camp had been erected some few months previous, and the rain which had been falling steadily for three hours had loosened the mud to the extent that the statement one of the boys driving made, was nearly correct, when he said that "the road hadn't any bottom to it." We were "stuck" for half an hour in one place, and it begun to look like we never would get out, when by the kindly help of another driver and his engine, we begun to "move" again, and finally reached the nurses quarters, a bedraggled, mud covered, tired and hungry set of travelers, just as the lights were being lighted.

The poor boys who drove the car were drenched to the skin, and so covered with mud that one could never have told whether they were white or black.

It was about six o'clock on Friday eve,

December 7th, when we arrived at our new home, were greeted warmly by our Chief, and ushered into a wide hall where some dozen or more nurses in white uniforms and jaunty little caps with a Red Cross in the front, some had on the red lined Army cape just as they had come off duty for supper, were waltzing around the room to the music of a small graphophone on a table near the wall.

A nurse was delegated to show us to our particular part of this domain, that we might remove our wraps, and traveling down a long corridor, with rooms on both sides, we turned a corner, and going half as far again, were ushered into what proved to be our only refuge from the world at large for the next three months. This particular bower into which we retired in a somewhat ruinous condition outwardly, I will briefly describe for the benefit of any ardent damsel whose patriotic fancy may have surrounded Army hospital life with a halo of charms. It was more like the inside of a large new barn than anything I can think of. It had been hastily arranged to accomomdate the nurses who were arriving now daily, in fact faster than the hospital could furnish room and beds for them. The first nurses on the scene had availed themselves

of the single and double rooms, until they were all filled, so we who were arriving at this time, would have to make ourselves as comfortable as we could in the dormitories, of which there were two. These large rooms were well ventilated, as there were twelve good-sized windows on each side. Said windows were innocently bare of shades, curtains, or any such useless folderols as yet. A few weeks later we were given shades which relieved us of the tiresome exercise of climbing up on chairs and pinning blanket or sheet over the window so that the pedestrians outside may not look in upon our night capped seclusion. As one girl aptly put it "we had no more privacy than a gold fish!"

Our beds were placed in rows, head against the wall, like in the wards, with the space of about two feet between. To each bed belonged a white iron frame for holding mosquito netting in place forming a sort of fly and mosquito proof cage round about our bed. These frames were detachable, and one could use their own pleasure about using them. Many and varied were the uses we put them to. Some held the weekly wash, sometimes it was the weekly ironing which hung from them until thoroughly dry, and some im-

provising damsels went so far as to create a bathroom by pinning sheets around the frames.

One enterprising miss from Wisconsin stretched her trunk rope back and forth from head to foot of the bed and had a clothesline somewhat diminutive as to area, but from which the skirts and petticoats dangled with as much dignity as if they had hung from a real washline.

No male ever set foot into our sanctum, except the Doctor whose duty it was to look after us when ill, and the soldier boy who started the fire in the big stoves early in the morning. On such times everybody was tucked securely in their little bed without so much as a nose peeping out.

Our trunks not having arrived, we could do nothing this first evening, but walk about our new habitation and observe what was going on about us.

Nurses seemed to be arriving on every train, and it was very exciting to watch the new faces come and go, throughout the busy proceedings, of making room for the fast-arriving females who were bent upon securing shelter and a bed before they were all taken.

I was standing under a large tree on our back porch, (the porch having been built

around the tree, leaving it free to rear its branches heavenward without let or hindrance) talking with a group as we watched the storm. The rain was coming down in sheets, when up the path thru the woods, from the railroad, emerged two bedraggled objects. One with a rain soaked hat in her hand, the other carrying a suitcase. We had been able to discern them by the vivid flashes of lightning. When they had come upon the porch, it proved to be a little nurse from Kentucky, who, instead of getting off at the city, had remained on, alighting at the junction near the camp, and but for the soldier boy who had come out on the same train, could never have found her way to our hospitable roof thru the rain and darkness. The ringing of the supper bell caused quite a commotion, as we repaired to the dining room to partake of our first meal under Uncle Sam's roof in our new home. There were no special places for each person until later on, and it was sort of a snatch and grab affair, until every one was seated. The three tables were long enough to seat about fifty persons at each. Our seats were wooden benches. No cloth adorned our festive board, but the supper that evening, eaten from a table of bare boards, from off quaint granite plates, tasted as

good to us as any meal I had ever eaten before, or have eaten since.

We had hot cornbread, butter, salmon croquettes, peas, coffee, and stewed prunes.

Later we had white oil-cloth to cover the boards of the table, but to the day we left we drank from granite mugs, and ate from granite plates, which was of course all very well for an Army camp hospital.

Months later when eating from Haviland china spread upon a snowy linen cloth, in the grand dining-room of the Government hospital at Washington, I felt a keen loss and wished for our little old granite plates and cups and pioneer ways of the camp hospital once more. The hours of this first evening at camp flew by rapidly, with so many strange faces to study, conversation with girls from every nook and corner of our land it seemed, for though there were only some forty nurses here at this time, I believe as many states were represented. In only one or two instances were there more than one from a state.

In conversation with the Chief Nurse a few days later, I learned that upon her arrival here just one month previous to this, there were no women folks, except the six nurses who had accompanied her.

Finding the hospital containing upwards of six hundred patients, she had immediately wired to Washington, requesting them to send more nurses down here at once. She found it necessary to send wire after wire before help came, but at last the nurses began to pour in upon them, at the rate of ten and twelve a day until the housing proposition began to look alarming. We four nurses had landed upon the scene among the first of this avalanche, so had the unique and absorbing experience of seeing them "blow in" and be tucked away somewhere.

When Miss Sheets from Kansas, Miss Blessing from Iowa, and Miss Comfort from Oklahoma, all came in a body, the Chief laughingly greeted them with the words "come right in, we are so badly in need of all three of you!"

Each day saw our beds shoved closer together to make room for others, till at last there was scarcely room enough to permit our bodies to pass between them.

Our dressers, one for two persons, sometimes had to do for three, were placed back to back, thru the center of the room, with just enough room to squeeze thru between them, as we passed from one side of the room to a neighbor on the other side.

The two by four planks sticking out upon the walls disclosed wonderful possibilities in the way of shelves for ink bottles, brush and comb, medicine bottles, boxes of salve, shoe polish, and powder and puff boxes. For girls are girls, be they society belles or nursing spinsters, and I suppose if relegated to some uninhabited island away where no one would ever lay eyes upon them would still be known to powder their noses.

It was very interesting to listen to the girls who were here first, recount upon their foregoing experiences. It seemed that before their arrival the sick men had been attended by men alone. Boys in the hospital corps. Young, some not over sixteen, inexperienced, having had no previous training before coming into the Army. We could only conjecture the state of affairs they must have found. After a whole month, there was still one nurse attending two wards containing thirty and forty sick men, in many cases. And on night duty one nurse was expected to look after four or five wards, each of which contained not less than thirty patients.

CHAPTER VI

Enthusiasm Aroused

THESE overworked nurses were very glad indeed that we had come to help them out, and upon listening to their account of the pathetic condition in some of the wards, created in us such enthusiasm and anxious desire to begin to do what we could for them, that we could hardly wait for the morrow to dawn, that we might go on duty and lend our hands at relieving the tired nurses, as well as to bring what comfort and cheer we may to the sick soldiers.

I am free to confess that about ten p. m. that same evening, I began to have a realizing sense of the fact that my hospital bed was not going to be a bed of roses. For tired out and sleepy tho I was from being up late the night before, in fact I doubt if any girl there had had a comfortable night's repose since leaving home, I must say that the prospect of sleep amid that chaldron of buzzing tongues, wildly

rushing to and fro of female forms, and as time passed on, regardless of the lateness of the hour, brightly burning lights shining in one's face, looked discouraging. If, in fact, one undertook to appropriate one's own bed, would have to dislodge and cast aside some three or four energetic nurses who had turned one's couch into a knitting fraternity, over which bright hued balls of worsted were rolling helter skelter, even to the bed next door.

Alas! they were not busily engaged like our faithful grandmothers at home, in knitting socks and sweaters for the boys in the trenches, but were weaving together bright strands of yarn into all sorts of freakish sweaters to adorn their own persons, for it could never be said of those light weight, sleeveless affairs that they were things of comfort should the thermometer drop to a freezing point.

I soon got over any foibles I may have entertained concerning a quiet room and total darkness as being necessary to insure sound sleep, and after routing the knitters I piled myself down expecting the turmoil to keep me awake half the night, but sleep got the better of me to such an extent that my stockings hanging at the foot of my bed appeared to gape and my hat nodded on its peg before I gave in.

There were many new arrivals that evening. They seemed to be coming in at all hours.

I recall being awakened sometime along in the early hours of the morning, by someone tiptoeing around the bed next to mine, and imagining I am at home and this a burglar, I raised on my elbow and before clearly awake screamed: "who goes there and what do you want?" A tired voice answered: "Only a weary nurse from California, who asks nothing more of heaven or earth than to crawl into this bed next you and fall asleep, whether to wake again till the judgment day matters little just now!"

I found myself sleepily welcoming her to our happy home, having preceded her by a few hours, as I tho't, poor thing having traveled so far she must be dead tired, before falling back to sleep. I have spoken of it being so warm upon our arrival. Before twelve hours had elapsed, we nurses almost perished with cold. The rain turned to sleet, and before the following morning there was a cold, raw, penetrating wind, the like of which I never felt before, and hope to never feel again.

Many of the nurses took to their beds with colds, sore throat, grippe, tonsilitis, and some with pneumonia, from the sud-

den change of temperature, change of climate and exposure. There were about a dozen down at once those first weeks at the hospital. I kept as well as I ever was in my life, except for a frost-bitten toe from walking thru snow to the wards and from the extreme cold of the porches where most of our worst patients were, and only required plenty of letters from home and friends to make me as happy as I could be at such a distance from them all. Morning after morning, the water pipes were frozen and we would have to go on duty without even washing our faces.

That first morning upon awaking, my first sensation was of a peculiar shivery feeling all over my frame. It seemed as though the cold was being pumped up from beneath our beds by a bellows, and the breath which left our nostrils made a white streak through the room. I felt somewhat like the contents of an ice cream freezer must feel, (if it has any feeling at all) when the crank first begins to turn.

The chilliness seemed to grow more intense, and to penetrate even to the very bones.

The building at this place had been hastily erected for temporary use only, and the floor being at least four feet from the ground, gave ample room for the cold air

to rush under, and up through the boards of the flooring. Next day I put the small rug which I found at the end of my bed, under my mattress, next the springs, and wrote home for a wool blanket, which, after having received, I suffered no more with cold.

The house had the appearance of standing on stilts and being in the midst of a pine forest, my dreams were frequently disturbed by imagining all sorts of gigantic animals of phenomenal appearance, strolling at leisure about under our abode. Indeed a half dozen families of bear or porcupine could have had quite comfortable quarters under there.

It is only just to relate, however, that we never discovered anything more ferocious than a family of pigs, but of such quadrupeds the woods were full. Later these pigs possessed no end of attraction for me, "never having had an opportunity of observing their graces of mind and manner till I came to Camp B—, whose porcine citizens appeared to enjoy a larger liberty than many of its human ones. Stout, sedate looking pigs hurried by each morning to their places of business, with a preoccupied air, and sonorous greeting to their friends. Genteel pigs, with an extra curl to their tails, promenaded in

pairs, lunching here and there, like gentlemen of leisure.

Rowdy pigs pushed the passersby off the sidewolk, tipsy pigs hiccoughed their version of "we won't go home till morning," from the gutter; and delicate young pigs tripped daintily through the mud, as if they plumed themselves upon their ankles, and kept themselves particularly neat in point of stockings. Material pigs, with their interesting families, strolled by in the sun; and often the pink, baby-like spuealers lay down for a nap, with a trust in Providence worthy of human imitation.

Upon this particular morning I called to my neighbor whose diminutive form lay huddled beneath the covers showing no signs of life, to see if she had become, (which required very little imagination to believe,) a "snow man" or woman, during the night, but a drowsy head poked out from beneath the covers and a yawn and very sleepy good morning showed me that she was alive, so I fell to rubbing the slowly congealing blood vessels of arm and limb energetically, with the hope perchance of saving some of my members from the dire calamity of frostbite.

And, before many moments, I noticed that almost everyone was busily engaged in doing likewise. It would have present-

ed a most ludicrous sight to an onlooker had there chanced to be one. Here were some twenty or thirty females clad in outing pajamas or nighty, each standing on top of her bed, one and all going through some violent physical exercise terribly in earnest, and totally independent of any rythm or unison of motion with her neighbor, but after a while each and all were rewarded for their strenuous exertions by a tingling sensation of warmth as the blood began circulating once more with its normal velocity through the veins.

By the time the last article of apparel had been dawned the breakfast bell rang, and we hustled around to the dining room, swallowed a cup of a fearful beverage called coffee, a piece of cold toast, and repaired back to the sleeping apartment again, don hats, coats and rubbers, for during the night about an inch of the coldest snow ever seen or heard of, had fallen over the ground. The stove which resembled a silo, and gave out about as much heat most of the time, had by this time begun to throw out hints of a warmth inside, but as we must be off to the wards, we had no way of finding out whether it was merely a hint and nothing more or not.

We four nurses who had arrived together the evening before, sort of hung to-

gether in this vast army of strange women folk, feeling more like old acquaintances, for as one girl put it, upon seeing so many white clad individuals in a body, that "she didn't know there was so many women, or white dresses in the world!" We walked together to the wards, a distance of about a quarter of a mile, over the frozen ground and upon being shown to the Chief Nurse's office, which was situated in the Officers building, were there dispersed, each nurse being sent to her respective ward, as the Chief saw fit.

There were twenty-six wards here at that time, each one of which contained all the way from thirty to seventy patients. One, the ward for mumps and measles, had about eighty patients at that time.

Upon meeting a soldier in the corridors, or anywhere, he would politely touch his hat or most military-like would salute us, which seemed a little odd at first, but we soon got used to it as to all the army ways.

Officers, likewise, either lifted their hats or saluted us in passing, sometimes both!

They were largely from the South, and I have heard remarkable stories of Southern chivalry. and if graces in the demeanor. or courtliness of manner can be constituted chivalry, then the word is not a misnomer as applied to the Southern gen-

tleman. There seemed to be an inborn courteousness of nature, and protective instinct toward women folk, that one does not always find as a chief characteristic of the gentleman of the North.

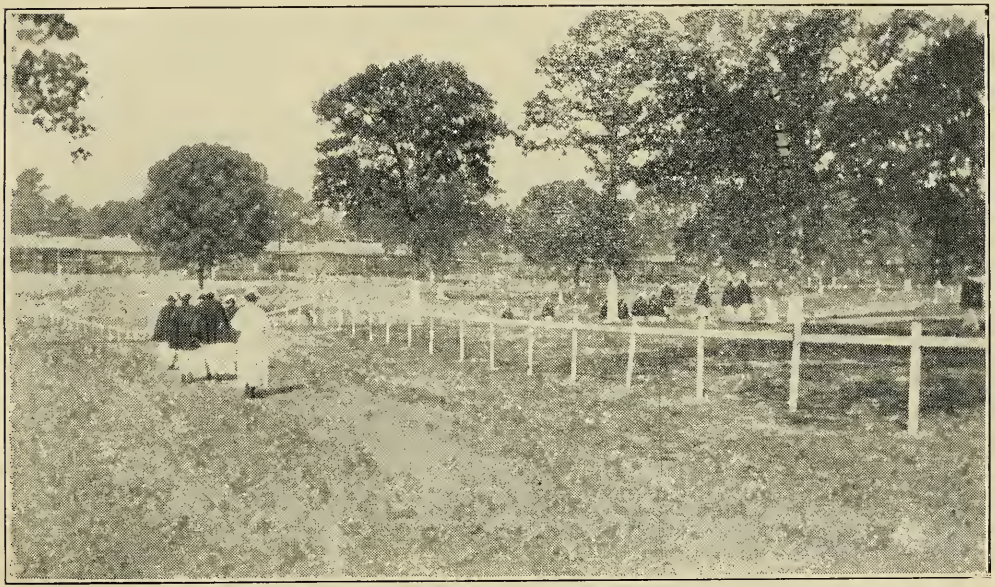
Perhaps after all it is the women's own fault, for having so much of that independent, self-sufficient lack of the oak and vine simile, predominating in so many of our Northern sisters, which has caused the lords of creation, to feel that their protection and chivalry is not solicited, needed or wanted, therefore they treat them accordingly. However, I think most all men prefer the clinging vine type of woman and do not as a rule think it necessary to waste too much gallantry upon the other more sturdy variety.

Arriving at the Chief Nurse's office, it took but a few moments to learn that I was to go to ward twenty-four. This I was informed was a ward for pneumonia, containing some thirty or forty patients, and there was already one nurse on duty there.

Now to find ward twenty-four was the next problem. But like an energetic fly in a very large cobweb, I struggled through a maze of screened-in corridors, meanwhile occupying my mind with frightened thoughts of a nurse I had heard of at camp

D—, of whom it was reported, that she had gotten lost in the corridors and had remained in total obscurity for the whole of one hour. There was no time to spare now, as it lacked but a few minutes of seven, that being the hour I was to be on duty. I met many nurses in their jaunty little Red Cross caps and red lined capes. I would not have the pleasure of wearing mine until the box arrived from Washington, which Miss Alberts had sent for some weeks before. Said box arrived on Christmas eve, and it was another joy added to the general festive air, about the place, to be handed our army regalia which the Red Cross was to loan us until we left the service.

The nurses each smiled, and wished me a good morning. Officers saluted and hurried by, sergeants, corporals and privates hurried by saluting as they went, and every one seemingly bent upon some assured destination, while I seemed to be wandering aimlessly about or in circles like "puss chasing her tail!" At last I grew desperate. Having tried all other available passages without success, I made a bold dash down a long corridor I had not seen before, dashed around a corner almost colliding with a fat colonel who smiled on top of his salute, as he dodged out of my



We walked to the wards over the frozen grounds. See page 62.

way, and brought up before three wards side-by-side bearing the numbers 23, 24 and 25 over the doors.

My goal was reached at last and just in the nick of time for the short hand of my watch pointed at seven. My heart beat faster than usual as I walked with dignity toward the ward in the center, wondering if I should be held up for a countersign, and forced to spend the rest of the day in the corridor. But marching boldly up to the door I found that no form was necessary. Two or three soldiers standing by fell back, a guard touched his cap, a soldier a little bolder than the rest opened the door for me, and, as I closed it behind me I felt that I was fairly started, and as an Army Nurse my mission was begun.

CHAPTER VII

On the Field of Action

FOUND myself in a small corridor with some four or six rooms opening off the side. Through a door in the far end, I could see into a large room and from the number of beds it contained I judged this to be the ward proper, where my future immediate endeavors lay. The doors opening into this hall from the side, led into various small rooms, one of which was a kitchen where the meals were dished up into individual trays, after being brought from the main large kitchen. Another was bath and wash room for corps men and convalescent patients, another a linen room where sheets, pillow cases, towels, blankets and pajama suits for the patients were kept. Another room where the ward master slept when off duty, and another from which issued the sound of voices which proved upon walking to the door from which the sounds came, to be an office. Upon entering this door my

gaze took in the occupants at a glance. Several soldiers sat about upon chairs having gone through the slight preliminary examination necessary (before being given a bed) of having temperature, pulse and respiration recorded upon the chart. A nurse was standing near a table or desk, in front of which sat a stoutly-built officer. Nobody present looked as though they would have been any worse off had I been doomed to wander indefinitely in the corridor outside and had failed to put in my appearance at that particular moment, unless perchance it may be the dejected looking objects sitting about on chairs, might have been better off had some one gotten them put to bed quite a bit earlier. Those at the desk seemed to be chatting and laughing, as though sickness was a thing unheard of, the war was a myth, and there never had existed any such a being as the Kaiser, and the gentleman at the desk had the air and appearance of having no heavier burden upon his shoulders than the inspection of the nurses' pretty, well manicured hands.

The office into which I had so bluntly made my entrance was small, being about eight by ten feet square.

There was a window at one side through

which could be seen ward 23 about twenty feet away.

A small coal stove stood in the center of the room, while a small table made from a box by some improvising individual, adorned one corner, above which hung a small mirror. A chair or two and the officers desk, which was strewn with various charts and sheets of paper, with which he evidently had some intention of occupying his mind some time, and an electric globe directly over the desk, was all in the way of furniture or fixtures the room contained. Upon thirty or forty pegs on the wall back of the desk hung loose sheets which later proved to be the individual charts of the sick men inside the ward, and as I became more immersed in army hospital affairs, I came to feel that said charts to all appearances were of vastly more importance than the man himself. Let one page get misplaced and directly the whole ward, if not the entire hospital at large, became a seething bedlam of pandemonium until such page was safely restored once more to its proper peg upon the wall.

One could, by glancing through these precious documents, find out at a moment's notice, patient's name, where born, age, color and nationality, religion, if he

had any, married or single, or anything else one felt at all curious to know, even, I suspect to how many freckles he had on his face, or as to what kind of a dog he liked best!

This wonderful record was there to show whomsoever it may concern, that John Jones had gone through all those juvenile ailments like whooping cough, chickenpox, and croup, and a list of all the other maladies by which John Jones had been assailed throughout his whole life, from the day he was born up until now, were likewise down in black and white, that all who "ran might read."

Upon my entrance the Lieutenant arose, the nurse came toward me smiling, with extended hands, and the words, "I'm so glad you've come for we sure do need more nurses here," and asking my name introduced me to Lieutenant Roberts, who was the doctor in charge of this ward. The nurse, Miss Sailor, had arrived on duty only the day before, as she explained to me in our walk through the ward, which was to say the least, a somewhat embarrassing experience, with some forty odd pairs of eyes turned in our direction, while one mischievous fellow begun singing, "I don't want to get well."

I thought as we passed along, especially

the porches, where the most critically ill boys were, that it presented a most sorry looking sight, for two women with the aid of perhaps two or three assistants to make much headway toward the recovery of so many sick men.

It was supposed to be a ward for pneumonia only, but for some cause in sorting them out, there had leaked in among the others, cases of tonsilitis, bronchitis, nephritis, jaundice, osteomelitis, and a few patients isolated upon the back porch, who were diagnosed as "meningitis suspects." These last, however, proved to be nothing worse than a mild case of grippe, or biliousness, and after a few judiciously administered doses of physic, by the nurse, "upon her own hook," which saved the lucky fellow a visit to that place of horrors, "the meningitis ward," brought them about all right, so that after a few days they were able to be sent back to camp.

By the time we had made the round of the ward, I had arrived at the conclusion that had some ten or a dozen nurses arrived upon this scene a month before, everything would now have a far different appearance. At it was, the one nurse upon the field being overwhelmed by the magnitude of the job before her, had simply not been able to do anything. I was glad, how-

ever, that someone had preceded me here, for had I been called upon to be the head and executive body, to preside over such a motely collection of sick humanity, I fear I should have been considerably more nonplussed than this woman seemed to be.

She was a little "roly poly" fat nurse from somewhere in the middle West, who took all things in a philosophical manner, rather inclined to make merry over the most woeful circumstances, rather given to make believe that she herself was lacking in ability and knowledge of running a hospital ward, in fact she had the air of believing everything a joke, from the shock headed boy known as Alphonse in the kitchen, to the grouchy much-disliked-by-all, hard-hearted Major who made the rounds of weekly inspection of the wards and scared everybody out of a year's normal growth.

In reality she was a sweet, cheery woman, a splendid nurse, and a good manager, and we got on famously caring for our big family of sick boys, until sickness took her from our ward for several weeks, and the somewhat abrupt plunge into the superintendence of a ward containing forty beds, kept the shining hours filled with washing faces, serving rations, giving medicine, sitting in a very hard chair,

with pneumonia on one side, diphtheria on the other, two typhoids opposite and a dozen dilapidated patriots limping, lying, and lounging about, all staring more or less at the new "Nuss," who suffered untold agonies but concealed them under as matronly an aspect as a spinster could assume, and blundered through her trying labors with a Spartan firmness, which I hope they appreciated, but am afraid they didn't.

Having a taste for surgical work, I had rather wished to have been placed in a ward of that kind, for rheumatism wasn't heroic or exciting, neither liver complaint or dropsy, even fever had lost its charms since "bathing burning brows" had been used up in romances, real and ideal. But later my experiences in surgical wards, especially one exclusively for empyema, where the air was permeated with the disagreeable odor accompanying a large number of cases of this kind if thrown together, caused me to wish I were back again with my various assortment of diseases, be they ever so uninteresting.

I found that things the dullest and most repulsive, steadily pursued, gradually in spite of one's self become interesting, in a certain way, chiefly from the satisfaction which follows the effort to bring comfort

and cheer to others. For in seeking others good, we find our own!

The daily contact with weakness and suffering, and saddening scenes of death, gave ample opportunity of studying human nature in all its various phases. But withal the strangeness of this new life, I liked it, and found many things to amuse, instruct and interest me.

As we ended our rounds Miss Sailor remarked that she guessed we had better commence washing the men's faces as some of them she didn't suppose had been treated to such a luxury for weeks. And the regiment of vile odors which always accompany sickness where there is fever, if not properly bathed and cared for, which assaulted our noses and took them by storm, while passing thro' 'the ward, made her words seem very credible.

The beds were all filled with sick men, some of whom were in a critical condition. And, as yet, nothing was being done for their comfort or cleanliness except what the few corps boys could do, who up to this time had done the best they knew how, in caring for them, under the doctors orders, gave their medicine, passed plates of food, thrice daily, gathered them up again, and if the contents of plate or cup had not been touched, it was too busy a

time to notice a little thing like that. "I can't be worried" or "'I can't be bothered" were expressions one heard on all sides.

Another phrase popular among the attendants which came as near causing me to lose my christian equilibrium as anything I had to contend with, was, "You're in the army now."

When one felt it in their heart to act with a bit of human principle, or lend their weight of influence in untangling some knotty problem for the betterment of all concerned, or to straighten up or prevent some unreasonable injustice, they were apt to be set down as unmilitary and too "chicken hearted," and be met with the abominable expression, "you're in the army now." And some individuals of the same calibre, I fear found that phrase a valuable rod to lean upon, and aid in shirking responsibility, as though to be in the army, excused one from carrying on their affairs with the same conscientious effort one would apply to them anywhere else. The very fact of our being here placed added responsibility upon our shoulders, and a duty to overcome in so far as we could, the hardness, unreasonableness and laxity of army life. For it is true that in some of the wards the circumlocution fashion prevailed, forms and fusses tor-

mented our souls and unnecessary strictness in one place was counterbalanced by unpardonable laxity in another.

Round the great stove in the center of the room, was gathered the dreariest group I had ever seen. Some had just arrived in the ambulance from the camp, and for these a bed had not as yet been arranged. Others had convalesced to the stage where they were permitted to sit up and it being too cold near their beds were hovering about the stove. Gaunt and pale, hollow-eyed, showing in their faces partly covered with beard, the ravages of weeks of sickness, but trying to wear a cheerful look.

I pitied them so much I dared not speak to them, though reading in their faces, all they must have been through since leaving their homes, and I yearned to serve the dreariest of them all.

Presently Miss Sailor darted inside a door, and emerged from it again bearing a basin of water in her hands. Coming toward me, put basin, towel, washcloth and a block of soap in my hands with these appalling directions. "Now we will begin to wash the men's faces as fast as we can. You take one side of the ward and I will take the other."

And the sight of the many beds with

their uncomfortable occupants also admonished me that I was there to work, not to wonder or weep; so I corked up my feelings, and returned to the path of duty, which was rather a most bewildering "road to travel" just then. Notwithstanding my four years of nursing experience, I will admit that I was somewhat staggered at the prospect of having to scrub one-half of the whole masculine population of the South, as it appeared, in a body. If she had requested me to shave them all, or do a "highland fling" on the top of the stovepipe, I doubt if I had been any more flabbergasted. To have to scrub some twenty lords of creation, at a moment's notice was, really—really—however there was no time for nonsense, and having resolved when I came to do everything I was bid, like Nurse Pemberton, "I drowned my scruples in my wash bowl, clutched my soap manfully and assuming a business-like and professional air, I valiantly fell to upon if not the whole Southern army, what at that moment looked to me to be a goodly portion of it.

In making a dab at the first dirty specimen, I saw I happened to light on a withered Frenchman from New Orleans, who being too old to cross the water and join his countrymen, had volunteered to enlist

with the boys here. The premature bursting of a hand grenade had removed most of the fingers from his right hand and placed several injuries about his head and face, the bandages of which caused that portion of his anatomy to be tastefully laid out like a minature garden, said bandages being the walks and his beard the shrubbery. He was so overpowered at the honor of having a lady "wash him" as he expressed it, that he did nothing but roll his eyes and call down blessings upon my head in an irresistable style which was too much for my sense of the ludicrous, so we laughed together and when I came to his feet, he stoutly remonstrated in both French and English, but I understood enough to appreciate the fact that he would never stand it to have the petite lady touch them dirty creatures. But in spite of his remonstrances, I plunked both feet into the bowl and scrubbed away like any tidy parent on a Saturday night, until I had him all done up "spick and span" as a smiling infant. "Je voo remair see Mam oi selle, and may the Saints guard round ye for the day's work ye be doin" was his parting sally, as I passed on to the next.

Some of them took the performance like sleepy children, leaning their tired heads against me as I worked, others looked

grimly scandalized, and some of the roughest looking, colored like bashful girls. One wore a soiled little bag on a string about his neck, and as I removed it to bathe his neck, I said "Your talisman did not save you from getting the grippe did it?"

"Well I reckon it helped mar'm foh mayhaps I might now be daid, if it hadn't been foh old mammy's camphoh bag and I am still livin as you see," answered this cheerful philosopher.

Another, with a boil on his cheek, asked for a looking-glass, and when I had brought one, regarded his swollen face with a dolorous expression as he muttered, "I'll be blowd if that ain't too bad! I war'nt a bad lookin guy befoh, but that blamed carbuncle is goin to leave a scah that'll finish me."

"What on earth will Rose Pike say?"

He looked up at me with his one remaining eye so appealing, that I controlled my rising mirth with difficulty, and assured him that if Rose was a girl of sense, she would not mind the scar, even if it was not caused by shrapnel or gunshot, for it was from affliction suffered while away doing his duty like a man, and soldier, preparing to go to scenes which might necessitate his bringing back far worse scars. When

I told him that all women thought a wound the best decoration a brave soldier can wear, his trouble seemed allayed for the time and I hope Miss Pike proved that the good opinion I had rashly expressed of her, was not over-estimated.

CHAPTER VIII

A Remarkable Transformation

MY next scrubbee, was a fair-haired, nice looking lad, with honest blue eyes, and what I judged when not drawn by pain and illness, to be a merry mouth. He was so young, not over sixteen, he lay on his bed so wan, and pale, and emaciated, that when a drop or two of salt water mingled with my suds at sight of this mere babe in such a piteous condition, the boy looked up with a brave smile. He had just that morning come in the ambulance, over the rough road from the camp field hospital, and after a long siege of fever, ague, and chills, had been pronounced able to be moved in to the Base Hospital, where it was hoped he would receive better care than the men at the camp were able to give him. The trip had proved almost too much for his frail strength, for he looked a total wreck. There was a little quiver of the lips as he said, "Now don't you fret youah self

about me Miss, I'm first rate heah for its 'pie' to lie still on this bed aftah knockin' about in that confounded ambulance that shakes what there is left of a fellow to jelly." I nevah was in one of these places befoh and I think this cleanin' up a jolly good thing foah us fellows, though I'm afraid it isn't foah you ladies."

"I expect you ran away to join the army," I said smiling as I contemplated his youthful face while I washed his hands. He wore a sheepish look as he answered. "That I did Miss and if I had minded my Mamma I nevah would be heah now."

His mother a widow had three sons older than he, all in the army, and this, her baby, had four years before him ere he would be old enough to enlist.

I asked him if he didn't think he could go back to his mother when he was well enough, and wait until he was old enough to enroll in the army. He said that "while lying sick in the field hospital with so much time to think, he had decided it was his duty to stay at home and look after his mother, while his brothers were away and that if he ever got well, he was going to try to get out of "this man's ahmy."

To hear one so young talking of life and

duty in such a sage and philosophical manner would have appeared comical, had it not been so pathetic, so I assured him that I was very glad he had come to such a decision, for I believed it to be a very wise plan.

Some months later I learned that his uncle, being the Captain of his company, had been able to procure his release from the army and he had gone home to his mother.

I say Mrs. called a voice half way down the ward, and when I came within speaking distance, a rough fellow from Arkansas, with large blisters covering his lips, testifying mutely to the intense fever he must have passed through, motioned me to come closer and as I did so, to learn what he wanted, he whispered ruefully:

"That next fellow you'll be comin to, that red-headed devil up yondah is a pro-German!" "Hang him!" "He'd nevah joined if he could a got out of it." "But he had to, or go back to his own country and fight." "And he held back as long as he could, I know him the good foh nothin whelp."

"He's got the chickenpox, and its a blasted shame to fetch him in heah along side of us fellows, and so I'll tell the chap that bosses this place, drat me if I don't!"

"Don't you wash him, noh feed him, but just let him hollah till he's tiahed."

I regret to say that I did not deliver a moral sermon upon the duty of forgiving our enemies, and the sin of profanity, then and there, but being an American to the roots of my hair, stared fixedly at the fat rebel, who it seemed was a copperhead in every sense of the word, and I am afraid I privately resolved to put soap in his eyes, rub his nose the wrong way, and excoriate his cuticle generally, had I the washing of him. My unamiable intentions were frustrated, however, for when I approached his bed with as christian an expression as my principles would allow, and asked the question: "Shall I try to make you more comfortable sir?" he answered gruffy, "No, I'll do it myself." "Here's your Southern chivalry with a vengeance" thought I, dumping the basin down before him, thereby quenching a strong desire to give him a summary baptism in return for his ungraciousness. This fellow was a disappointment in all respects, for he was neither pathetic, sick, sad, or savage, but a big fat stolid Dutchman with a head like a burning bush, and a perfectly expressionless face so I could ignore his existence, without the slightest drawback. One redeeming trait he certainly did possess, as

the floor speedily testified; for his ablutions were so vigorously performed, that his bed soon stood like an isolated island in a sea of soap suds, and he resembled a dripping merman, suffering the loss of a fin. If cleanliness is next to godliness, then was the big German the godliest man in our ward that day.

One tall, thin fellow declared he knew the millenium had arrived, for the fellows were getting their faces washed. "Said he had offered a fellow who was walking around, a half dollar to get him a basin of water a few days ago, and not being successful, had decided that when a fellah's sick enough to die, it don't make much difference whether he dies clean or dirty." "No, Baily, I said, it makes little difference to our Father in Heaven, what state our bodies are in, so our hearts are clean when we come to die. He looked thoughtful a moment, then said, "Well now, I nevah thought of that befo, and I reckon a fellah can keep his haht clean if he does have to lay heah in a duhty bed all sweaty and covahed with scabs."

Upon my recounting the story of Lazarus as I scrubbed away very gently, for his body had been covered with large ulcers it seemed, from the many scabs, he seemed

to take heart and a great deal of comfort in the fact that he could at least keep his heart clean, whatever befell his body hereafter.

Our human wash all done up and laid out to dry, as it were, the second syllable of our version of the word war-fare, was enacted with much success. Great trays containing soup, bread and meat, and coffee, appeared, and both nurses and attendants turned waiters, serving bountiful rations to all who could eat. I fear that in the rush my dress became a preambulating bill-of-fare, exhibiting samples of all the refreshments going. It was a lively scene. The long room with rows of beds down each side, while on the porch outside were the worst cases of pneumonia patients, so as to get all the air they could, too sick to talk or eat. The process of cleaning up here had been limited to bathing faces and hands, and placing ice caps to fevered heads. "But the beds all filled by an occupant whom water, shears and clean raiment had transformed from a dreary ragamuffin into a recumbent handsome hero, with a cropped head. To and fro rushed we two nurses, corps boys and convalescent boys, "skirmishing with knives and forks," retreating with empty plates, while the clashing of busy spoons

made most inspiring music for the charge of our "Light Brigade."

"Patients in front of them,
Patients to right of them,
Patients to left of them,
Nobody blundered.

Screamed at with brimming bowls,
Beamed at by hungry souls,
Steamed at by Army rolls,
Buttered and sundered
With coffee not cannon plied
Each must be satisfied
Whether they lived or died,
All the men wondered."

Curious contrasts of the comic and tragic met one everywhere, and some touching as well as ludicrous episodes might have been recorded that day, as well as all the succeeding days, but I suppose the events of that first day would naturally recur to one's memory more promptly than events which followed. A small Italian boy, beckoned me to his aid, and in broken English conveyed the information to my mind, that if I would help him "sit up" as he termed placing a rest back of him, he might be able to eat his soup, with which his bed and beard were getting plentifully anointed. He explain-

ed that to sit up without anything behind him made him very "deezy."

I saw him safely in a reclining position before leaving him, and went to the porch where my attention had been attracted by a boy, who was restlessly tossing about upon his bed. Observing that his food was untouched, I offered to assist him as I had the man I had just left. But he only shook his head, "Id like a drink of water please ma'am if you ain't too busy." I rushed away, but the water was shut off for some cause and none drawn in pail or pan, so I hastened to the next ward to see if by any chance there was any to be had there. But finding no better success, I hastened back to the ward and was gladdened to find the water on again. I hurried with a cup full back to him. He seemed to be asleep, but something in the tired white face, caused me to listen for his breath, but none came, his forehead was cold. Then I knew that while he waited, a better nurse than I, had given him a cooler draught, and healed him with a touch. I laid the sheet over the quiet sleeper, whom no noise could now disturb, and half an hour later the bed was empty. That hospital bed was lonely even in a crowd. For there was no familiar face to look his last upon, no friendly voice to say

good bye; no hand to lead him gently down into the "Valley of the Shadow," and he vanished like a drop in the sea upon whose shores so many women stand lamenting. Yet can we say no hand was laid on his at that time when we are told that, "not without God's will, e'en a sparrow can fall?" I think not. I should have felt bitterly indigant at this seeming carelessness of the value of life, had I not possessed great confidence in the words of our Lord and Master, that "the hairs of your head are numbered," and "ye are of more value than many sparrows."

The doctor having made his rounds, m e d i c i n e administered, temperatures taken, the afternoon wore away, and at five o'clock the kitchen boy who was known as the K. P. announced supper. The Corps boys flew, not to arms, but to their trays. The dozing patients awoke at the noise and commotion, and I presently discovered that it took a very severe onslaught of illness to incapacitate the boys for the consumption of their rations.

CHAPTER IX

Reminiscences

THE succeeding days were to some extent a repetition of the first. I am thankful to say that there were no more deaths in our ward for many weeks.

The men all having had their first good cleaning up in several weeks, by the end of the first week each and every mother's son had undergone a complete transformation. And having gotten the bodies of our boys into something like "ship shape" order, the task for the remaining days after the morning's tidying up was finished, was to minister to their minds, by writing letters to the anxious souls at home, answering questions, reading papers, or doing any task that might add to the comfort or enjoyment of the homesick lads we had under our care.

Upon entrance to the ward, each boy gave his money and valuables into the hands of the ward master to turn over to

the Lieutenant for safe keeping. Pocket-books, purses, miniatures and watches, were sealed up, labeled and handed over to the doctor, till such time as the owners thereof were ready to depart homeward or campward again.

One of the lively episodes of hospital life is the frequent marching away of such as are well enough to rejoin their regiments, or betake themselves to some convalescent camp.

The ward master comes to the door of each room that is to be thinned, reads off a list of names, bids their owner's look sharp and be ready when called for; and, as he vanishes, the room falls into an indescribable state of topsy-turveyness, as the boys begin to polish their shoes, brush clothes, overhaul knapsacks, make presents, are fitted out with needfuls, and—well, why not? kissed sometimes, as they say good bye; for in all human probability we shall never meet again and a woman's heart yearns over anything that has clung to her for help and comfort.

I never liked these breakings-up of our little household, though my stay at the camp, and hospital at Washington showed me several of them. I was immensely gratified by the handshakes I got, for

their somewhat painful cordiality assured me that I had not tried in vain.

The withered Frenchman mumbled out his unintelligible adieux with a grateful face and a premonitory smooth of his stubby mustache, but he got no farther, for some one else stepped up, with a large brown hand extended, and this recommendation for our faulty establishment:— "We're off, Ma'am, and I'm powerful sorry, for I'd no idea a orspitle was such a jolly place." "Sorry I can't get somethin' to bring me back to be took care of again; mean, ain't it?"

The doctrine of inglorious ease was not the right one to preach up, so I tried to look shocked, failed signally and consoled myself by giving him one of the little "housewives" the Red Cross workers had left for all who were leaving that day.

They fell into line in front of the ward, looking rather wan and feeble, some of them, but trying to step out smartly, and march in good order, though several leaned on sticks, instead of shouldering guns.

All looked up and smiled, or waved their hands, and touched their hats as they passed by the window, and so away. Some to their homes in this world, and some to that in the next; and for the rest of the day, I felt like Rachel mourning for her

children, when I saw the empty beds, and missed the familiar faces.

It was never exactly my intention to lecture to the boys, yet there were times, while busy about the ward duties, when it seemed profitable as well as agreeable, to speak a word in defense of the faith in Jesus, which is only the plain duty of anyone who considers himself a Christian. And as the great Apostle said "is our reasonable service."

I found on such occasions that the boys listened to such words respectfully and even eagerly. And on several occasions, as the one I have just described, when a body of them were leaving the ward, several informed me, with all sincerity that they were glad I talked to them in this manner, and would always remember my words to them.

The letters dictated to us in those days, were both interesting and comic, as well as pathetic. Full of affection, pluck and errors of speech, but nearly all giving lively accounts of life at the hospital, ending usually "with a somewhat sudden plunge from patriotism to provender, desiring "Marm," "Aunt Emmie," or "Caroline" to send along some cookies, pickles, or apples, to "your'n" in haste, "Hal," "Tom" or "Jake," as the case might be.

The evening meal was followed by washing feverish faces, smoothing tumbled beds, beating up flattened pillows, and general preparations for the night. By seven, the last labor of love was done, the last "good night" spoken, and if any needed a reward for the day's work, they surely received it, in the silent eloquence of those long lines of faces, showing pale and peaceful in the shaded room, as we quitted them, followed by grateful glances that lighted us to bed, where rest the sweetest, made our pillows soft, while night and nature took our places, filling that great house of suffering with the healing miracles of sleep.

CHAPTER X

Christmas in the Ward

AS the month of December sped on, the weather moderated to such a degree that, on Christmas eve sitting about the Nurses' home, it was so warm that the windows were thrown up, and the doors were left wide open. The balmy breezes were laden with an air of Christmas tide, and excitement ran high as the big army trucks would drive up to our back door, and the boys in khaki would unload boxes for this one and that, until each and every one had received some remembrance from friends and loved ones at home.

Many of the nurses were busy adding the last finishing touches to some small gift for the illest, or youngest, lad in her ward, and the hours flew by, full of gaiety and laughter, in anticipation of the festive occasion. Groups of nurses and soldier boys came in with their arms laden with

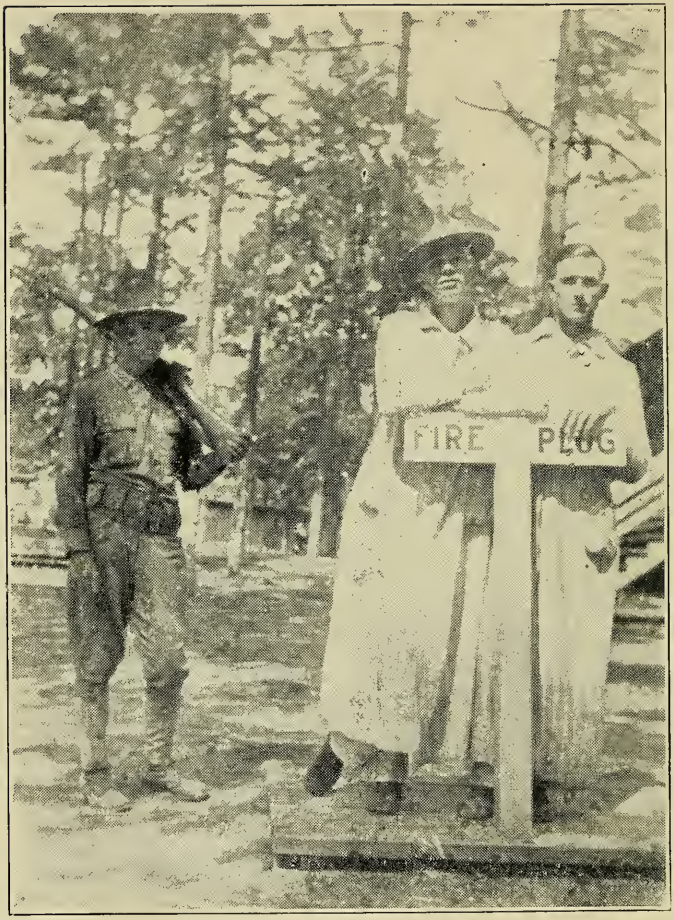
holly, palms and glistening branches of magnolia, for decorating the halls and reception room at the nurses' barracks. For tonight was the night of the first party, given as a reception to the nurses by the officers of the hospital in appreciation of our advent upon the scenes at this time. The tables in the great dining room were shoved to one end for serving tables, the benches placed around the walls for seats, and the floor sprinkled with corn meal to make it smooth and slick for those who wished to partake in that part of the festivities, to "trip the light fantastic" until midnight. A large bowl of fruit punch was arranged upon a table under a bower of fern leaves, holly and mistletoe, and granite cups in abundance were handy so that each one may help themselves when they wished.

Plates piled high with sandwiches of various kinds and plates of cookies covered by paper napkins were reposing upon the tables in the background, until their time should arrive to take a part in the merry festivities.

There were some dozen or more of us who did not care for the dancing, but enjoyed watching the dancers glide to and fro, each girl attired in some soft pretty

evening frock, the various soft shades of color making a very pretty picture. The officers resplendent in all their straps, bars, belts, buttons and chevrons, their well-fitting uniforms and leather puttees setting off their manly figures to the best advantage, made a very striking picture, which I doubt if any present on that occasion had been accustomed to see very often. We watched the scene until quite late, when tired and sleepy from a long day in the ward, we betook ourselves to our sleeping abode, whose windows being open wide, we fell asleep to the tunes of the then popular patriotic airs of "Over There," "Joan of Arc," "Pack Up Your Troubles in Your Old Kit Bag," and "A Long, Long Trail a Winding."

"Merry Christmas!" "Merry Christmas," "Merry Christmas, Miss Lee!" echoed from every side as I entered my ward that Christmas morning. My colleague having left the ward a week earlier, I was alone to plan and superintend the preparations necessary to brighten our ward for this, our first Christmas in the Army. Most all of the nurses had spent a good part of their leisure moments the past week trying to fix up some little gift for the sick, home-sick boys in our wards for as the Chief nurse once had



One-half of whose male population were taking the other half to the guard house.
See page 153.

said to me in conversation: "After all Miss Lee, men are but a lot of sick babies, when they are sick, and the bravest and most manly of them enjoy the coddling that only a woman's hands know how to administer."

No wonder the greetings were hearty, and thin faces brightened, for when they awoke that morning, each lad found that, in the silence of the night, some friendly hand had laid a little gift beside his bed. Very humble little gifts they were, but chosen with thoughtfulness and a desire to make the blithe anniversary pleasant, even in a hospital, hoping to keep uppermost the lesson of the hour,—Peace on Earth, good will to man.

"I say ma'am these are just splendid, and I had just been wishing for some of them," cried one poor fellow, surveying a bunch of white Malaga grapes with as much satisfaction as if he had found a fortune. "I thank you kindly Miss, for the paper and fixins, I hated to keep borrowing, but I don't seem to be able to get hold of any money," said another, eyeing his gift with happy anticipations of the home letters, with which the pages should be filled.

"I want my basket of flowers hung in

the center of the room Miss, where all the boys can see it, if you please."

"But then I'm afraid you can't see it yourself Louis, and I think you're fonder of them than the rest," I said, taking both the little basket and the hand of my pet patient, a lad of twenty, who was valiantly fighting for his life against quick consumption. "That's why I can spare it for a while, I shall feel them in the room, and they'll do the boys good. You pick out the one you like best for me to keep and hang up the rest please." As I handed him a sprig of holly and a red rosebud, his smile was as sweet and winning to me, as was the flower to the lonely lad who never had known womanly tenderness and care until he found them in a hospital. Louis' prediction came true, the flowers did do the boys good, for all welcomed them with approving glances, and all felt their refining influence more or less keenly, from cheery Pat, who paused to fill the cup inside with fresh water, to surly Ben Burrows who stopped growling as his eye caught sight of the sweet peas just like those blooming in his sweetheart's garden last summer.

I explained to them all then, that the one who merited the greater part of their gratitude was Miss Sailor, their first

nurse, then indisposed as also their faithful night nurse, came in for her share of the thanks, for we three had tried to be Santa Claus to our boys at this time.

"Now let's begin to enjoy the festivities of the day. Fling up the windows Pat, and Alphonse go for breakfast, while I finish washing faces and straighten the bedclothes." After which directions I set to work and after half an hour's time, thirty gentlemen with spandy clean faces and hands, were partaking of refreshment with as much appetite as their various conditions would permit. The air blew in through the windows as blandly as though spring had come, and wished the boys the compliments of the season in the mildest mood; while a festival smell pervaded the whole house, and appetizing rumors of turkey, mince pie, and oysters for dinner circulated through the wards. When the breakfast things were cleared away, medicine administered, throats swabbed, ears irrigated, temperatures taken and all the disagreeables over, and the ward tidied up, the fun began.

In any other place that would have been considered a very quiet morning. But to the weary invalids prisoned in the room, it was quite a whirl of excitement.

None were dangerously ill, but Louis,

and all were easily amused, for weakness, homesickness and ennui, made every trifle a joke or an event.

In came Pat with a big load of holly and magnolia branches. And such of the men who could get about and could help, did so. The corps boys generously aided when their duties permitted, and soon a green bough hung at the head of each bed, depended from the electric lights, and nodded over the doors and windows, while the finishing effect was given by a cross and wreath of holly at each end of the room. Each one manifested great interest, and many were the mishaps attending this performance, causing frequent laughter, for sick men when convalescent are particularly jovial. When Sambo, the colored incapable, essayed a grand ornament above a door, and relying upon one insufficient nail, descended to survey his handiwork with the proud exclamation: "Look at de neatness of dat job, gen'l'men," at which point the whole thing tumbled down about his ears,—how they all shouted but pneumonia Bob, who having lost his voice, could only make ecstatic demonstrations with his legs.

Poor Sambo cast himself and his hammer despairingly upon the floor, while stepping into a chair I pounded

stoutly at the traitorous nail, and with a bit of string made all fast, amid a burst of applause, which arose from the beds. When Lieutenant Roberts came in to see what all the noise was about, I explained while I tucked a bit of holly in his buttonhole, and wished him a Merry Christmas, as he bolted out again calling Christmas a hard time, but exulting over the thirty emetics he would have to prescribe on the morrow. When everything was done, I think every one agreed with Louis, when he said, "I think we are coming Christmas in great style; things look so green and pretty, I feel, as I was setting in a bower."

Pausing to glance around the ward enjoying the Chrismasy effect the greenery gave to it, I noticed Harkins, a boy from Ohio, looking as black as a thunderbolt. He bounced over on his bed the moment he caught my eye, but I followed him up and gently covering the cold shoulder he evidently meant to show me, peeped over it, asking with as much gentleness as I could "What can I do for you Harkins? I want my boys to all have bright faces today." "I didn't get the box from home. they said I should get it two, three days ago. Why don't I get it then?" growled Harkins.

"It is a busy time, you know, but it will come if they promised, and patience won't delay it, I assured him."

"They're a slow set, and my patience is about gone, I'd get it all right if I wore shoulder bars, as I don't I'll bet I'll never see it till the things are all spoiled and ain't fit to eat, and news is old and I don't care a rap about it."

"I'll see what I can do; perhaps before the hurry with dinner begins, some one will have time to go for it."

"Nobody ever has any time but folks who would give all they are worth to be stirring around. I know you can't get it; its my luck, so don't worry ma'am."

I did not worry but worked, and in time someone was found, provided with the necessary money, pass, and directions, and dispatched to hunt up the missing Christmas box.

Pausing to see what came next, not that it was necessary to look for a task, but, to decide which out of many was most important to do first. Seeing my rheumatic patient Barker with his face all screwed up and tears running down his cheeks, I hastened to him.

"Why Barker crying again? which is it headache, or back this time?"

"It's my 'rheumatis' ma'am. My bones ache so I can't lay easy any way, and I'm so tired I just wish I could die and be out of this misery," sobbed the poor ghost of a once strong and cheery fellow, as I wiped the tears away and gently massaged the weary shoulders. "You must not wish that Barker for the worst is over and all you need is to get your strength again. The doctor has said you may sit up a little, and it is quite time you tried; a change of posture will help the ache wonderfully and make this "deadful bed" as you call it, seem very comfortable when you come back to it."

"I just can't ma'am. My legs ain't no good at all and I ain't even strong enough to try." "You never will be if you don't try." Never mind the legs, Pat will carry you. I have a wheel chair all ready and you will be real cozy by the fire. Why not celebrate Christmas day by overcoming the blues, which only retard your recovery, and prove to the others that your illness has not taken all the manhood out of you."

"It has though, I'll never be the man I was, and may just as well lay here till spring, for I shall be no use if I do get up."

If Harkins was a growler, this man was

a well acted charade of his own name, as well as a whiner and few hospital wards are without both. But knowing that it was from much pain and suffering which had soured the former and pitifully weakened the latter, I tried to have patience with them, and still hoped to bring them round again.

As Barker whimpered out his last dismal speech I bethought myself of something which in the hurry of the morning, had slipped my mind till now.

"By the way, I've got another present for you. The doctor thought I'de better not give it yet, lest it should excite you too much, but I think you need a little excitement to help you to forget yourself, and when you realize how many blessings you have to be grateful for, you will make an effort to enjoy them." Blessings, ma'am? I don't see 'em." "Don't you see one now " And drawing the letter from my pocket I held it before him. "It's from my wife, I guess. I like to get her letters but they are always full of grievings and worryings over me, so they don't do me much good."

"This one may prove an exception to the rule and you may be very happy when you read it," I said as he sat moodily scanning the outside of the envelope.

Then breaking the seal he began to scan the pages and a wonderful change lighted up his countenance. As I watched him I thought there must indeed be wonderful news to change his face so quickly from the picture of gloom to one of noonday brightness.

"Hooray! hold on a bit,—it's all right,—I'll be out again in a minute."

With which remarkable burst Barker vanished under the bedclothes, letter and all. Whether he read, laughed or cried, in the seclusion of that cotton grotto, was unknown, but I suspected that he did all three, for when he re-appeared he looked as though during that pause, he had dived into his sea of troubles and fished up his old self again.

"What will I name her, Miss Lee?" was his first remark delivered with such vivacity that his neighbors began to think he was getting delirious again. "What is your wife's name?" I asked, gladly entering into the domesticities which were producing such a salutary effect.

"Her name is Ann. I'de decided on Steve, for I was countin on a boy named after me; and now you see I ain't a bit prepared for this young woman."

Very proud of the young woman he seemed nevertheless, and perfectly resign-

ed to the loss of the expected son and heir.

"Why not call her Stephanna then? That combines both her parents names and is not a bad one in itself."

"Now that's just the brightest thing I ever heard in my life!" cried Barker sitting bolt upright in his excitement, though half an hour before he would have considered it an utterly impossible feat. "Stephanna Appleton Barker,—its a tip-top name, ma'am and we can call her Stevie just the same. Ann will like that, bless them both! Don't I wish I was at home? And down he went again despairing.

"You can be before long if you choose. Get your strength up and off you go. Come, begin at once,—drink your beef-tea and sit up for a few minutes just in honor of the good news you know."

"I will, By Steph!—no, by Stephanna! That's a good one, ain't it?" and the whole ward was electrified by hearing a genuine giggle from the "Bluing-Bag." Down went the beef-tea and up scrambled the determined drinker, with many groans, and a curious jumble of chuckles, staggers and fragmentary repititions of his first, last and only joke. But when settled in the comfortable wheel chair, upholstered with pillows, with the gray flannel robe on, and the new Christmas slippers getting their

inaugural scorch, Barker forgot his bones and sat before the fire seemingly feeling amazingly well, and looking very like a trussed fowl being roasted in the primitive fashion.

The languid importance of the man, and the irrepressible satisfaction of the parent were both laughable and touching things to see, for the happy soul could not keep the glad tidings to himself. A hospital ward is often a small republic, beautifully governed by pity, patience and the mental sympathy, which lessens mutual suffering. Barker was no favorite, but more than one honest fellow felt his heart warm towards him as they saw his dismal face kindle with fatherly pride, and heard the querulous quaver of his voice soften with fatherly affection, as he said "my little Stephie, sir."

I guess he'll be getting along foin now Miss, this has given him the boost he needed, and in a week or two he'll be off our hands."

Pat made the remark with a beaming countenance and Pat deserves a word of praise for he never said one for himself. An ex-patient promoted to an attendant's place, which he filled so well that he was regarded as a model for all the rest to

copy. Patient, strong, and tender, he seemed to combine many of the best traits of both man and woman; for he appeared to know by instinct where the soft spot was to be found, in every heart, and how best to help sick body or sad soul. No one would have guessed this to have seen him lounging in the hall during one of the short rests he allowed himself. A brawny six foot Irish fellow, in a much faded (by oft repeated washing) khaki shirt, khaki trousers, also showing evidence of much scrubbing, for Pot was immaculate, Army shoes and spiral puttees, a well shaven coarse-featured face, whose prevailing expression was one of great gravity and kindness, though a humorous twinkle of the eye at times betrayed the man, whose droll sayings at times set the boys in a roar.

"A good-natured, clumsy body," would have been the verdict passed upon him by a casual observer; but watch him in his ward and see how great a wrong that hasty judgment would have done him.

Unlike his predecessor who helped himself generously when the meals came up, and carelessly served out rations for the rest, leaving even the most helpless to bungle for themselves, or wait till he was done, shut himself into his pantry and

there,—to borrow a hospital phrase,—"gorge." Pat often left nothing for himself, or took cheerfully such cold bits, as remained when all the rest were served; so patiently feeding the weak, being hands and feet to them, and a pleasant provider for all that, as one of the boys said,—"The vittles tastes better when Pat fetches them." If one were restless Pat carried him in his strong arms, holding him with a touch as firm as kind. If one were homesick, Pat wrote letters for him with great hearty blots under all the affectionate or important words. More than one unhappy fellow read his fate in Pat's pitiful eyes and breathed his last breath away on Pat's broad breast,—always a quiet pillow till its work was done, then it would heave with genuine grief, as his big hand softly closed the tired eyes and made another comrade ready for the last review.

The war showed us many Pat's. For the same power of human pity which makes women brave, also makes men tender, and each is the womanlier, the manlier, for these revelations of unsuspected strength and sympathies.

At twelve o'clock Christmas dinner was the prevailing idea in ward No. 24, and when the door opened, every man sniffed for savory odors broke loose from the

kitchen and went roaming about the house. Now this dinner had been much talked of; besides the Government supplies from the Q. M. department, certain charitable and patriotic persons in the town of N— had endeavored to provide every ward in the hospital with materials for this time-honored feast. Some mistake in the list sent to headquarters, some unpardonable neglect of orders, or some premeditated robbery, caused the long expected dinner in ward 24 to prove a dead failure; but to which of these causes it was attributable, was never known, for the deepest mystery enveloped that transaction. The full weight of the dire disappointment was mercifully lightened by premonitions of the impending blow. Alphonse was often missing, for the corps boys were to dine en masse after the patients were done, therefore a speedy banquet for the latter was ardently desired, and, he probably devoted his energies goading on the cooks. He would appear in the doorway from time to time, make some thrilling announcement and vanish, leaving ever-increasing appetite, impatience and expectation, behind him. Dinner was to be served at one; at half past twelve Alphonse proclaimed:

"Dere ain't no vegetables but beets and pitaters."

A universal groan arose, and several indignant parties on a short allowance of meat, consigned the defaulting cook to a warmer climate than the tropical one he was then enjoying.

At quarter of one, Alphonse increased the excitement by whispering iminously: "I say, dere ain't no plum puddin."

"Fling a pillar at him and shut the door, Pat," roared an irascible being, while several others received the news with equanimity.

At ten minutes of one, Alphonse piled up the agony by adding the bitter information, "Dere isn't but two turkeys for this ward and dey's little fellers."

Anxiety instantly appeared on every countenance, and intricate calculations were made as to how far the two fowls would go when divided among thirty men; also friendly warnings were administered to several of the feebler gentlemen not to indulged too freely, if at all, for fear of relapses.

Once more did the bird of evil omen return, for just as the clock struck one, Alphonse croaked through the keyhole, "Dere ain't no pies at all, only ice cream, gen'l'men."

That capped the climax, for the masculine palate has a predilection for pastry

and mince pies was the sheet-anchor to which all had clung when other hopes went down. Even Pat looked dismayer; not that he expected anything but the perfume and pickings for his share, but he had set his generous heart on having the dinner an honor to the institution, and a memorable feast to the men, so far away from home, and all that usually makes the day a festival among the poorest.

He looked pathetically grave as Barker began to fret, Harkins began to swear under his breath, Rowland to sigh, Louis to wish it was all over, and the rest began to vent their emotions with a freedom which was anything but inspiring. At that moment, I was called to the door to attend the occupants of a big car which had driven up to the front. A few moments later returning to the ward bearing a great basket of apples and oranges in one hand and in the other a basket containing several convivial looking bottles.

"Here is our dessert boys! A kind friend remembered us and we will drink her health in her own grape wine." I said while I noticed a feeble smile circulating round the room, as in some sanguine bosoms hope revived again. Pat briskly emptied the baskets while I whispered to Louis,—" I know you will be glad to get

away from the confusion of the next hour, to enjoy a breath of fresh air, and dine quietly with Mrs. Blain in A— wouldn't you?"

"Oh! Miss I'de like it so much, but how in the world can I go " The ambulance most killed me last time, and I am weaker now." "My dear boy I should not think of letting you go in the ambulance. Miss Blain's auto is at the door and all you have to do is to let me bundle you up and Pat carry you out to the soft cushions of the car," I said as he looked eagerly at me, and gave a sigh of relief as he submitted to both of these processes, and as I watched his happy face as the car smoothly glided away, I felt amply repaid for the little sacrifice of rest and pleasure for Mrs. Blain had come for me instead of Louis. "Now Pat we must make this unfortunate dinner go off as well as we can," I whispered. "On many accounts it is a mercy that the men are spared the temptations of a more generous feast; pray don't tell them so, but make the best of it, as you know very well how to do."

"I'll try my best, Miss Lee, but I'm no less disappointed, for some of thim, bein no better than children, have been livin on the thoughts of it for a week, and it comes hard to give it up." Having him place

several small tables together in the end of the room I made a judicious display of plates, knives and forks while he went for the banquet. Presently he returned bearing the youthful turkeys and the vegetables in his tray, followed by Alphonse looking melancholy, but elated, that the time was near for his pessimistic phophecies to be fulfilled.

I played a lively tattoo as the procession approached, and when the viands were arranged, with the red and yellow fruit prettily heaped up in the middle, it really did look like a dinner.

"Now, gentlemen, h e r e ' s richness! Here's the delicacies of the season, and the comforts of life!" said Pat, falling back to survey the table with as much apparent satisfaction as if it had been a lord mayor's feast.

"Hurry on Pat, and give us our dinner, what there is of it!" grumbled Harkins. "Boys, continued Pat, beginning to cut up the turkeys, these noble birds have been sacrificed for the defenders of their country; they will go as far as ever they can, and, when they can't go any farther, we shall supply their lack with soup or ham, oysters having given out unexpectedly. "Put it to a vote; both having been provided on this joyful occasion, and a word

will fetch either." "Ham! ham! responded from all sides. Soup was an every-day affair, and therefore repudiated with scorn; but ham being somewhat of a rarity, was accepted as a proper reward of merit, and acknowledgment of their wrongs. The "noble birds" did go as far as possible and with the addition of a plentiful helping of gravy and each plate garnished by a large slice of ham along side of the potato and beets, would have been at any other time considered a "fair feed," but on this day a few extras had been expected and the disappointment was keen.

Taking the one brick of ice cream and dividing it into thirty diminutive pieces, Pat placed each mouthful upon the center of a large clean plate, and handed them around with the gravity of an undertaker. Dinner had restored good humor to many; this hit with the dessert put the finishing touch to it, and from that moment an atmosphere of jollity prevailed. Healths were drunk in grape juice, apples and oranges flew about as an impromptu game of ball was got up, and Pat gamboled like a sportive giant as he cleared things away.

Pausing in one of his prances to and fro, he beckoned me out, and, following, handed me a plate heaped up with good things.

"Come right in here and eat it while its hot, said he, leading the way into the kitchen and pointing to a sunny window seat.

"Are you sure you have eaten, and this is not your dinner Pat?" I said while his wild expostulations showed me that I was right and his words "why of course I have, I've just been feastin' sumptuous in this very room," were of no weight.

"I don't exactly see what you have been feasting on," glancing around the tidy pantry, and now Pat, since I am now going to the nurses' quarters to dinner, and a good one, I command you to sit down here and eat your dinner without a protest or murmur, nevertheless I thank you heartily for wanting me to have your dinner, but since I know of no one who deserves it more than yourself, you will be obliging me very much by consuming it as quickly as you can.

"Thankee, Miss, I'll only eat it to oblige you, for at the rate he's going on Alphonse wouldn't be equal to it," said Pat, looking very much relieved, as he polished his last fork and hung his towel up to dry.

Upon returning to the ward after partaking of a very good Christmas dinner at the nurses' home, having left Pat in charge during my absence, I found that a

pretty general siesta followed the excitement of dinner in the ward, but by three o'clock the public mind was ready for amusement, and the arrival of Harkins' box provided it.

He was asleep when it was brought in and quietly deposited at the foot of his bed, ready to surprise him on awaking. The advent of a box was a great event, for the fortunate receiver seldom failed to treat the rest, and next best to getting things from one's own home, was the getting them from some other boy's home. This was a very large box, and all felt impatient to have it opened, though Harkins' exceeding crustiness prevented very great expectations. Presently he awakened, and the first thing his eye fell upon was the box, with his own name in big black letters on the top. He stared stupidly at it for awhile, as if it had been the continuance of his dream, then sat up exclaiming: "There you are! you've come at last!" "Now who said it wouldn't come? Who hadn't the faith of a mosquito? and who didn't half deserve it by being a fusser," cried Pat, emphasizing each question with a bang on the box as he waited, hammer in hand, for the arrival of the ward master, whose duty it was to oversee the opening of such boxes and parcels which came

to the ward. "Ain't it a dandy big box?" Knock it open and don't wait for anybody or anything!" cried Harkins tumbling from his bed and pounding on the lid with his one hand, his other arm having been broken in an accident at the Remount station. In came the ward master, off came the cover, and out rolled a motley collection of apples, papers, socks, doughnuts, pickles, photographs, pocket handerchiefs, tobacco and perfume. "All right, glad it's come,— don't kill yourself," said the ward master, as he took a hasty survey and walked off again. Drawing the box nearer the bed, Pat delicately followed, and Harkins was left to brood over his treasures alone. At first all the others following Pat's example, made elaborate pretenses of going to sleep, being absorbed in books, or utterly interested in the outer world. But very soon curiosity got the better of politeness, and one by one they all turned round and stared. They might have done so from the first, for Harkins was perfectly unconscious of anything but his own affairs, and having gone through everything, read the letters, looked at the pictures, undid the bundles, turned everything inside out, and upside down, tasted all the eatables, and made a spectacle of himself with jam, he paused to get his

breath and find his way out of the confusion he had created. Presently he called out: Miss Lee, will you come and help me straighten up my duds? As I began to straighten up he said, "I don't know what I'll do with them all, for some won't keep long; I'm afraid my appetite will give out a'fore I finish them up or they spoil." "How do the others manage with their things " I asked innocently, knowing without having to put the question. "They give 'em away, but I'll be hanged if I do, for they are always callin' me names and pokin' fun at me. Guess they'll not get anything out of me now."

The old cross look came back as he spoke, for it had disappeared while reading the home letters, touching the home gifts. Still busily folding and arranging, I asked: "You know the story of the three Gnomes, which are you going to be—Disagreeable, Halfway pleasant, or Very agreeable?" Harkins laughed at this sudden application of the nursery legend, and seeing my advantage I pursued it: "We all know how much you have suffered, for having a broken arm and limb at one time is no joke, and we respect you for the courage with which you have borne your long confinement, but don't you think you have given the boys some cause for laugh-

ing at you, as you say? You used to be a favorite and can be again, if you will only try to cheer up and help keep the others cheerful. Better lose both arm and limb Harkins than cheerfulness and self-control, and the respect of your fellow sufferers." Pausing to see how my little lecture was received, I felt that Harkins' better self was waking up and added yet another word, with a desire to help a mental and spiritual ailment as well as the physical ones. Looking at him as kindly as I could, I said in a lowered voice,—as I did not wish the others to bear: "This day on which the most perfect life began, is a good day for all of us to set about making ourselves readier to follow that divine example. Troubles are helpers if we take them kindly, and the bitterest may sweeten us for all our lives. Believe and try this Harkins and when you leave us, let those who love you find that tho' lame in arm and limb you have fought an important battle and won." Harkins made no answer, but sat thoughtfully with a half-eaten apple in his hand. He stole a glance about the room, and as if all helps were waiting for him, his eye met Louis'. From his solitary bed he would seldom leave again before going to his grave, the boy smiled back at him so sweetly and happily

that Harkins' heart warmed as he looked upon the faces of mother, sister and sweetheart, scattered about him, and remembered how poor his comrade was in such tender ties, and yet how rich in content, which, "having nothing, yet hath all." He had no words with which to express his feelings, but it came to him and did him good, as he proved in his own way. "Miss Lee," he said a little awkwardly, "I wish you'd pick out what you think each would like, and give 'em to the boys." He got a smile in answer which drove him to his apple as a refugee, for his lips would tremble, and he felt half proud, half ashamed, to have earned such quick approval. "Let Pat help you," I said: "He knows better than I. But you must give them all yourself, it will so surprise and please the boys; and tomorrow write a capital letter home telling what a jubilee you made over their fine box." At this proposal he half repented; but as Pat came lumbering up at my summons, he laid hold of his new resolutions with all his might. Dividing the most cherished possession, which (alas for romance) was the tobacco, he bundled the larger half into a paper, whispering to me: "Pat ain't exactly what you'd call a ministerin' angel, to look at, but he is amazin' near one in his ways, so I'm goin'

to begin with him." Up came the "ministering angel" in khaki and cowhide boots, and Harkins tucked the little parcel into his pocket, saying as he began to rummage violently in the box: "Now just hold your tongue and lend a hand here about these things." Pat was so taken back by this proceeding that he stared blankly, till a look from me enlightened him; and taking his cue, he played his part as well as could be expected on so short a notice. Clapping Harkins on the shoulder—not the bad one, Pat was always thoughtful of those things—he exclaimed heartily: "I always said you'd be all right when your leg got well and this arm of yours got a good start, and here you are jollier'n ever. Lend a hand! So I will, a pair of 'em. What's to do? Pack these traps up again?" "No, I want you to tell me what you'd do with 'em if they were yours." Pat held onto the box a moment as if this second surprise rather took him off his legs; but another look from the prime mover in this resolution steadied him, and he fell to work as if Harkins had been in the habit of being "free." "Well let's see. I think Id put these clothes into this smaller box and stand it under the table, handy. Here's newspapers and pictures too! I'd make a circulatin' lib'ry of them; they'll

be a real treat. The pickles I'd set on the window here as a kind of relish at dinner time or to pass along to them as longs for 'em. Cologne, that's a terribly handsome bottle, ain't it? That now would be a first-rate gift to somebody as was fond of it, sort of delicate attention, you know,—if you happen to meet such a person anywheres." The jelly I'd give to Miss Lee to use for the sick ones; the cake and that pot of jam that's gettin' ready to work, I'd stand treat with for tea, as dinner wasn't all we could have wished." "The apples I'd keep to eat and fling at Louis there, when he's too bashful to ask for one, and the tobaccer I would **not** go lavishin' on folks that have no business to be enjoyin' luxuries, when many a poor fellow is dyin' of want in the world." Harkins was enjoying the full glow of his generosity by this time. As Pat designated the various articles, he set them apart, and when the inventory ended, he marched limping away with the first installment: The biggest, rosiest apple and all the pictorial papers for Louis. Pickles are not usually regarded as tokens of regard, but as Harkins dealt them out one at a time, for he wouldn't let anybody help him, and his good hand being the left, was as awkward as it was willing,—the boys' faces

brightened, for a friendly word accompanied each, which made the sour gherkins as welcome as sweetmeats. With every trip the donor's spirits rose; for Pat circulated freely between whiles, and thanks to him, not an allusion to the past marred the satisfaction of the present. Jam and cake was such an addition to the usual bill of fare, that when supper was over a vote of thanks was passed, and speeches were made; for being true Americans, the ruling passion found vent in the usual "Fellow Citizens! and allusions to the Stars and Stripes for ever." After which Harkins subsided, feeling himself a public benefactor and a man of mark.

The doctor's evening rounds over, medicines given, tidying up the ward, bathing faces and hands, beating up pillows, straightening and brushing out crumbs from the beds for the night, and Christmas day is over in Ward 24. Going to a shelf at the end of the room, I took down a rusty covered volume, and sitting down by Louis' bed began to read aloud. One by one all other sounds grew still; one by one the men composed themselves to listen; and one by one the words of the sweet old Christmas story came to them, as I read on. If any wounded spirit needed balm, if any hungry heart asked food, if

any upright purpose, new-born inspiration, or sincere repentance wavered for want of human strength, all found help and consolation in the beautiful and blessed influences of the dear old book and the story of that first Christmas. The clock struck seven, the day's work was done; but I lingered beside the boy Louis, for his face wore a wistful look and it seemed as though there was something he wished to say. "What is it Louis boy What can I do for you before I leave you for the night?" I asked as he drew me nearer and whispered: "It's something that I know you'll do for me, because I can't do it for myself, not as I want it done and you can." "I just want you before you go, and because its Christmas, to tell the boys—every one, from Pat to Alphonse—how much I thank 'em, how much I love 'em, and when someone else is in this bed and I'm gone, how glad I was that I had known 'em, even a little while." "Yes, Louis, I'll tell them all. What else can I do my boy?" "Only let me say to you what no one else must say for me, that all I want to live for is to try to do something in my poor way to show you how I thank you Ma'am." "You've made this such a happy home-like place, I shall be sorry when I have to go." Poor Louis! It must have

fared hardly with him all those twenty years, if a hospital seemed home-like and a little care, a little sympathy could fill him with such earnest gratitude. "Today I hadn't anything to give you I'm so poor, but I wanted to tell you this on the last Christmas I shall ever see." "He placed a kiss upon my hand which he held in his very himbly, and the sincerity of a great gratitude made it both a precious and sacred gift to me who half unconsciously had made this brief and barren life so happy and contented at it's close. After telling the boys his wish I murmured, as I smoothed back the hair from his brow: "I have had my present, now Louis: Good night my boy and happy dreams," and left the ward.

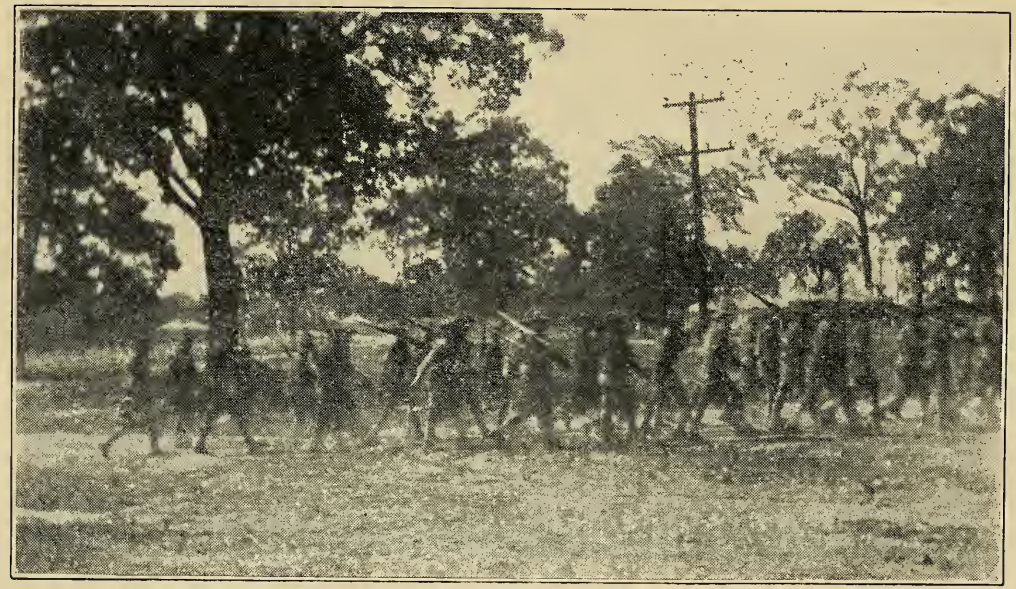
CHAPTER XI

A Change of Surroundings

IT was the custom at this hospital to make a change all around once a month, when the night nurses came off and others took their places, which was a very good plan, as the work in some of the wards was much harder than that in others, and by this method each and all had their turn at both heavy and light work.

I had during the month in our ward grown very fond of my boys, and had a reluctance at leaving them. For we had grown to seem like comrades. I usually found them in the jolliest state of mind their condition allowed, for it was a known fact that Miss Lee objected to blue devils, and entertained a belief that he who laughed most was sure to recover first. At the beginning of my reign, dumps and dismals prevailed, and a general "Hark! from the-tombs-a-doleful-sound," style of conversation seemed to be

the fashion; a state of things which caused one coming from a merry social Northern town to feel as if she had gotten into most untoward circumstances, and the instinct of self-preservation, to say nothing of a philanthropic desire to serve the race, caused a speedy change in Ward No. 24. More flattering than the most gracefully turned compliment, more grateful than the most admiring glance, was the sight of those rows of faces, all strange to me a little while ago, now lighting up with smiles of welcome, as I came among them, enjoying that moment heartily with a womanly pride in their regard, a motherly affection for them all. But now they would all soon be going home on furlough after their long sick spell, or back to camp to take up their various duties where they had left them when overtaken by sickness. Many of the boys had already gone and many new recruits had been added to our ranks since that first day but my heart was a trifle sad as I made my last rounds of the ward and told my boys goodbye. Then I left them, taking with me the memory of many pleasant manly faces, glad to have known and ministered to so brave a lot, and hoping for each a speedy return to home and loved ones and the pursuit of happiness nearest to his heart when the



Marching, marching, always marching. See page 156.

war should finally be over and our greatest trouble at an end.

My next field of action lay in Ward No. 18, which was for clean surgical cases. The work here was very interesting; the patients all looked happy and well cared for, the beds looked so neat in their white wool blankets (we had only gray in the other ward) but strange to say there were no pillows for the beds. A piece of mosquito netting stuffed into a pillow case, or a folded blanket did duty as a pillow until a happy circumstance fitted our ward out in fine shape and not a lad but whom possessed a soft fleecy downy pillow for his head.

It was while here that some of the happiest, as well as saddest moments were spent. There were two doctors in the ward, one a round-faced, short, heavy-set doctor, Lieutenant John's, from New Orleans, and a tall, thin, lank, lean doctor, from Oklahoma, by the name of Lieutenant Boggs. Three times a day this doleful visaged individual made his rounds, leaving the customary amount of discomfort, discontent and dismay behind him. He was anything but a sanguine or conciliatory personage, though skillful enough doctor no doubt. He saw life through the bluest of spectacles, and seemed to think

that the sooner people quitted it the happier for them. I dare say he did his duty by the men, but if they recovered, he looked half disappointed and congratulated them with cheerful prophesies that there would come a time when they would wish they hadn't. If one died he seemed relieved and surveyed him with pensive satisfaction, saying heartily: "He's better off now, poor devil, and well out of this miserable world, thank God." Dante's doleful line might have been appropriately written over the door:

"Who enters here leaves hope behind."

But for Dennis O'Lear, the capable and efficient ward master here, the sanitary influences of the ward would have been small. Lieut. John's seldom appeared upon the scenes, but when these rare occasions did occur, he was always jovial, genial and jolly, cheering the boys with some pleasant remark, the direct antipode in disposition to Lieut. Boggs. Dennis O'Lear (the boys called him Learie for short) and Dr. B. perfectly understood and liked each other well enough, but never agreed, always skirmished over the boys as if manful cheerfulness, and medical despair were fighting for the soul and body of each one. "Well, Dr. B. would remark, while inspecting some wound not healing as quickly as

he expected it to, tetanus sometimes follows such cases, but that is soon over, and I should not object to a case of it, by way of variety." The patient's hopeful face would fall, and he would set his teeth as if the fatal symptom were already felt. "If one kind of lockjaw was more popular than 'itis, it wouldn't be a bad thing for some folks I could mention," observed "Learie" covering the well healed wound as carefully as if it were a sleeping baby, adding, as the doctor walked away, "there's a sour old saw bones for you!" Why bless your bones Harry, you're getting on splendid and he just goes on that way because there's no chance of his gettin' another whack at you!"

"Now there he goes to Burns to squelch him, just as we've blowed a spark of spirit into him; if ever there was a born extinguisher, its Boggs." Learie rushed to the rescue, and not a minute too soon, for Burns who now labored under the delusion that his recovery depended solely upon his getting up in a chair a few minutes each day, was sitting by the fire, looking up at the doctor, who pleasantly observed, while feeling his pulse,—"So you're getting up another fever are you?" "Well we've grown rather fond of you and will keep you six weeks longer if you have

set your heart on it." Burns looked nervous, for the doctor's jokes were always grim ones, but Learie took his other hand in his and gently rocked the chair as he replied, with great politeness: "This robust convalescent of our'n would be happy to oblige you, sir, but he has a pressin' engagement up state for next week and couldn't stop on no account." "You take the responsibility of this step upon yourself, do you? Very well, then I wash my hands of Burns, only, if that bed is empty in a week, don't lay the blame of it at my door." "Nothing shall induce me to do it sir," briskly responded Learie. "Now then, turn in my boy, and sleep your prettiest for I wouldn't but disappoint that cheerfulest of men for a month's pay; and that's liberal, as I ain't likely to get it."

This ward was not so well supplied with towels and bedding as the one where I had been. We had some half dozen pillows to do duty for forty beds. As in so many instances in the Army Hospital, there was a lack of judgment in distributing supplies, for there would be an over abundant supply of some commodity, while a total absence of some other perhaps far more useful article existed. For example, while having no pillows, one whole long shalf was needed to hold the stacks of pillow

cases in the linen closet. While there were dozens of bath towels in this ward, not a face towel or wash cloth was to be found, until several weeks later.

Whether from neglect of those in charge in putting in requisition for articles needed, I know not, but it was most pathetic to watch the poor fellows brought from the operating room, thrown into bed and have to lay for days and weeks without a pillow with any approach to softness under their heads.

In a letter to friends at home I remarked upon this subject and mentioned the fact that I almost envied the sofas all over the country, the nice soft pillows I was sure reposed in state upon them, while our poor boys lay there with nothing but the hard mattress under their heads, or perhaps for slight elevation, a folded blanket. Little did I know then the outcome of that letter. It went before the Red Cross Society in a Northern town, and touched the motherly hearts of those Northern ladies in behalf of the boys in the South, and ere long two huge boxes of lovely pillows traveled through many states until finally landing in Ward No. 18 made forty beds comfortable, forty faces bright and happy, and forty hearts very grateful, and full of praise for the kind

and loving hearts of the women who cared for their sufferings by adding to their comfort and ease though so far away. There were enough pillows besides, to bring cheer and comfort to other wards also. I will relate a very sad instance which occurred while here.

One day after I had been in my ward about three weeks, I came upon a young boy about eighteen, who had just come in from camp the evening before. I saw at a glance that he was frightened almost to death. He was pale at the prospect of having to submit to an appendectomy. Upon questioning him, I learned that he had never spent so much as one night away from home until coming into the Army, whereupon alighting in camp, the few weeks of strenuous exercise connected with drilling, marching with heavy packs, digging mock trenches, etc., had brought on a pain in his side which was diagnosed as appendicitis. He had then been hustled in here to be "whittled on" as he expressed it. I saw at once that he was in need of some "mothering" so I proceeded to comfort him as best I could, by telling him that I was very sorry that the doctors found an operation needful, but that it would in all probability not be so dangerous or painful as he had surmised.

That the anaesthetic which was not at all dangerous, seeing he had a good heart, would prevent his suffering any pain, and that I was much interested in his case, and would be at his bedside when he came back, to watch his recovery from the anaesthesia. My words, I saw, had a quieting effect upon him, and he looked eagerly at me as he said: "Please maa'm would it be too much trouble for you, could you go to the operating room with me?" I was very sorry just then, for the strict rules in Army hospitals which prevented one's going and coming as one pleased, and I knew there were sufficient nurses on duty in the operating room at that time to attend to all duties connected with that department, and that it would be considered a very foolish and unnecessary request should I ask leave to accompany one of my boys, just to satisfy a whim, but his face was so eager and wistful that I hadn't the heart to refuse, so I said I would see what we could do about it.

It happened Dr. Boggs was in the office when I made my request. I had hoped Dr. John's would be present, for I had little hope of gaining any favor from Dr. Boggs. It was evident that I had made as absurd a demand as if I had asked for the nose off his respectable face, for he scowled and

stared, and before he had time to burst forth with the torrent of scathing remarks, which was aminous from the looks of his face, I backed out leaving him no doubt to regret that such mild maniacs were left at large!

I went back to Moor's bedside and told him that since he would be gone from the ward such a little while, and while he was gone, I would have to see to preparing his bed for his return, with fresh linen, warm bottles, etc., that it would be impossible for me to accompany him, but with promises of being on hand at his bedside upon his return, I gave him a pat on the shoulder and a gentle smooth-back to his forelock as I said: "There I knew you were one of my bravest soldiers, of whom I feel very proud." He grabbed my hand, laid his cheek upon it for a second, then was wheeled down the ward toward the door, and out into the corridor leading to the operating room. It was through my solicitation for this homesick boy that afterward caused my summary dismissal from this ward, by Dr. Boggs, who seemed to take a dislike to both the boy and myself, from the day I asked to accompany the lad to the operating room.

When Moor returned, I noticed symptoms of a cold even before he was well out of

the ether. And little wonder. One of my chief worries was, on seeing the boys come from the warmth of the operating room, be wheeled through a long corridor with many times insufficient covering over their bodies which usually were drenched with perspiration.

The ward master or corps boys of inexperience were usually left to attend to this part of the proceeding, and should a nurse remonstrate at such procedure, would in many cases be tho't fussy and be set aside with an amused smile of masculine superiority, so the consequences were that in many, as in Moor's case, a most disagreeable cold, if not ether pneumonia would develop. "Lieut." John's being absent so much, I drew the attention of "Lieut." Boggs to the boy, but when in a day or two his cold had developed to such alarming proportions without any apparent solicitation on the doctor's part, I again mentioned the boy to Dr. Boggs, adding that I feared if something was not done soon, he would go into pneumonia. His cough being tight and hoarse and his temperature rising. Dr. Boggs evidently did not consider the boy's condition in such a grave state as i had pictured it, for a couple of days more elapsed without any order for treatment of any kind whatever. Mean-

while, upon "my own hook," I smothered him with old-fashioned remedies outwardly, like compresses of camphorated oil, turpentine, etc., which I knew, if doing no good, would at least do him no harm, and which had the soothing effect upon the lad of causing him to feel that something was being done for him. He suffered intensely when obliged to cough, as the incisinon in his side was still very tender. He seemed to be perfectly satisfied, however, that all was being done that could be, and remarked once while I was applying my greasy treatment to his chest, that he was glad I was doing that for he knew that if he were home, his mother would be doing that very thing. This was comforting to me, but I trembled lest the Doctor might take a notion to look him over, and finding him all dobbed up with grease create a scene, and order such foolish "coddling" of the patients be discontinued. It was the fourth day after Moor's operation, his cold was still very troublesome, though he declared the pain in his chest had ceased since I had begun to "grease" him, that in making the rounds of the ward with the big Major who was head of the Surgical Department at the hospital and who came through the wards once a week, that brought calamity upon my head in the

shape of the wrath of Lieut. Boggs. He was with the Major, and it was also the nurse's duty to accompany them upon their rounds. Upon approaching Moor's bed, whose occupant was at that moment suffering greatly from an attack of coughing, I took it upon myself to explain his case to the Major, seeing Dr. Boggs had no intention of doing so, there being indications of passing by without a word of comment. I felt that if his case were neglected further it might prove very grave in the end. I realized to the fullest extent, the terrible and unpardonable breach of military tactics I displayed in speaking to an official of any rank over my superior officer's head, but as I was not, nor do I have any ambition to ever be, at all "military," and as I had twice called the attention of the Lieutenant in charge to the boy with no results, and as I was there to do what I could to help our boys, and as this boy's fate and life perhaps hung in the balance, I cared naught for the consequence myself, so I could get the major to see that the case was looked into and find out if the boy was in as serious a plight as I had feared. I know not why our doctor had so persistently neglected this boy for he seemed to take an interest (in his doleful way), in the cases under his

care, as a rule, and perhaps had I taken no notice of the lad, he would have taken up his case long ago. I scarce could help the interest I showed, for his helpless, frightened homesick condition, had enlisted my sympathies from the first. Perhaps for that very reason the doctor thought that I was making enough fuss over him, but any discerning person could see that he was in need of medical attention, as well as coddling. I believe a good doctor not only sees everything that is, but a great many things that are not. Until upon this occasion I had taken it for granted that Dr. Boggs, despite his morose disposition which was evident at all times, was at least, like so many doctors, a kind sympathetic person to whom a nurse might go in her anxieties concerning her patients, for had not a nurse who was about them so much, bathing, tending, and in many instances feeding them, and doing all those little things necessary to the comfort and well being of the sick, a much better chance to note any unusual symptoms which might at any moment develop, unnoticed by the physician whose observations are confined to a hurried trip through the ward not oftener than three times during the day?

An unsympathizing physician or nurse

is, to my mind, a person bereft of one of the most potent agencies of treatment, and of cure. He knows not the whole extent of his art, when he recklessly neglects the marvelous influence of mind over body. A wise physician or nurse knows, I believe, that the best way to win from patients a full understanding of their case, is to secure their confidence by kindly, sincere, and sympathetic treatment. The Major examined the boy thoroughly, raised his eyebrows, and turning to Dr. Boggs asked, "How long has this boy's lung been affected?" Lieut. Boggs stammered as he replied, "He was just operated on 'sir' a day or so ago 'sir,' and hasn't gotten all the ether out of his lungs yet sir."

"H'm, the Major grunted, he has a decided touch of pneumonia in the left lobe here; however, you did a good thing by poulticing as you have been doing, this, while he wiped the disc of his stethoscope on a piece of cotton to remove the grease. Just keep up the turpentine, and lard, and with a few curt orders concerning medication, to "Lieut." Boggs, we passed on down the ward.

A glance from Dr. Boggs' eye showed me that I had made an enemy and I wondered in just what manner he would try

to "get even with me," should he be of a vengeful disposition.

I felt I had done the best I could, and while I bore no ill will toward Lieut. Boggs, I did feel that he might have shown a little more concern in this matter.

A few days after this incident, I received a call to the Chief's office.

I soon learned that I was, though having only a week left of service before it should be my turn to go to another ward, to be transferred to another ward at once! I must leave my dear boys of whom I had grown so fond. The boys who had received with such gratitude the pillows from my home friends, that I had toiled over like a mother over a family of sick babies. Each and every one had some characteristic winsome way about him, all felt toward me as toward a mother or elder sister. Many were the little tokens of appreciation which had been showered upon me while there.

I learned that Dr. Boggs had complained that I wearied him unnecessarily about the boys' conditions. The Chief had said "of course Miss Lee, we all know the reputation Lieutenant Boggs has of surliness and grouchiness, but it is best, where there is any dissatisfaction to separate the parties in the ward." I felt too bad to

cry. Not that I wanted to stay in his ward—why could he not have waited the few remaining days when my time would have been up to leave the ward, and not have taken such an unkind way about it? Well, he had his revenge!

I said nothing to the boys, just bade them good night, as usual, as I left the ward. But before the next day was over at my new ward, which was not far distant, every mother's son who could walk, creep or crawl or be wheeled in a chair, came over to my ward to tell me how sorry they were I had left them. In another fortnight "Moor, my pet patient himself, was wheeled over by one of the boys, and stayed in my ward and warmed by our fire as long as he could stay, before being called back to supper.

Many precious little gifts to this day repose in my trunk and occasionally as I gaze upon them, bring back sweet memories of the dear boys who were so anxious in their grateful hearts to show their appreciation of the little care and kindness it was our privilege to minister to them.

Bits of crochet work from mothers and sisters, of boys, who, recounted their nurse's kindness to them in such glowing words that those at home sent tokens of regard to show their appreciation of the

care shown to their loved boys while ill away from home. A dainty cap from the Governor's wife in a Western state whose son lay ill so long in our ward; pillow tops, handkerchiefs, bits of lace and no end of dainty cards and beautiful letters, lay in the box of keepsakes, whose worth, in affection and love, the rarest gift of all, can never be measured.

I recall one stalwart fellow, who came shame-facedly toward me one day, holding in his hands a very long string of beads, saying that he had taken the first opportunity of buying me a present, to show his appreciation of my kindness to him while he was sick. I felt a hesitancy in taking them, as I seldom wear beads, but not wishing to disappoint him, I thanked him kindly. The poor fellow had given several dollars in exchange for the beads, (the length of the string would have permitted the wrapping of them about my neck half a dozen times with enough left to go around my waist once, I think,) to an Indian who was going about the camp selling them, reaping a fat harvest from the boys whose only way of separating themselves and their pay was at the canteen.

It was reported later that the said Indian was a German spy, finding out all he

could about the hospital, while going about in the guise of an Indian peddler. He was found to have maps of the camp and hospital in his hat, and it was reported that he was shot in the town of A. I do not know how true this report was. But the sweetest gift to me of **all,** I think was a huge bunch of magnolia blossoms. We had had, in our ward No. 24, a very dear boy who had suffered with complications of ear trouble following measles. Shy, sweet-faced, large honest brown eyes, too young and gentle and sweet to be in training to take the life of his fellow men! So modest that he colored like a school girl when I washed him, and when I came to his feet which were very soiled and cold as ice, he did not seem to understand just what was happening. But when I turned the covers back just enough for both feet to be plumpped into the tub of warm suds, he raised his head, gave one look and sank back, burying his face in the pillow with the exclamation: "My dirty feet!" but when they were nicely dried and warm and comfortable he banished his timidity and said, "I feel so comfortable now, I never can show you how much I thank you Miss, but I hope I can sometime." Several months after this while sitting with a group of nurses under the trees in

the open air, in front of the large screen upon which the pictures of "Pershing with the Army in France" was to be shown in a short while, someone stole up in the twilight and laid a wonderful bouquet of the large beautiful magnolia blossoms in my lap. The bunch was about as large as my arms could hold and everyone a perfect specimen. Not a word was spoken, neither did he stop to receive my thanks, but kept moving on and as I scanned his back closely in the quickly gathering dusk, I recognized Marks, of the "foot washing" and I prized his gift very highly, as I realized to what height he had climbed to obtain them. After the pictures I watched for him and going to him I told him how I appreciated his gift and the pleasure it had given me. There was a radiant smile on his face as he said: "It's nothing compared to what I'd like to do for you Miss, for I never will forget you."

My thoughts were very pleasant as I wended my way back to our barracks across the wide stretch of ground that lay between, and my reflections ended with this exclamation, "God bless the brave lads, who without much thought of fear were preparing all these months to go and face machine gun fire, shot and shell, without a qualm, but who quailed at the

thought of having a woman wash their feet.

Having espoused the cause of christianity early in life, it was one of my chief desires to see all of my boys christians before going upon the hazardous journey to a foreign land, from which so many of them should never return. So I made it a point as I felt it a duty, not to let any of the boys pass from the wards in which I attended them, without at some time during their stay, hearing words of earnest admonition to take the Saviour as their guide and helper for time and eternity. That He would prove an ever present help in time of need. I tried to impress upon their minds, that not their own deeds of sacrifice or bravery could save them, that nothing less than faith in Jesus' blood which was shed for the remission of sins, could make them safe. I heard some of the nurses expressing an idea, which seemed to become quite popular, that, the sacrifice of giving their lives would save even the most desperate of the wicked and degenerate. It grieved me to have this erroneous teaching promulgated among the boys, for if such were true, then there would be no need of a Saviour. But God's word says that our righteousness is as filthy rags, and that there is no name given

under heaven whereby we can be saved, but in and through the name of Jesus, and that faith in His blood alone can cleanse us from sin.

I pointed out by the Bible, how that it was absolutely necessary for each soul to repent, and be born again, that is, to forsake his sins and become a new creature in Christ, trusting in Jesus' blood alone to cleanse him from sin, and that he is then, and only then, fit to die and meet his God.

After pointing out the truth as it is in God's word to the different groups that came and went, through those b u s y months, while going about the humble duties of bathing faces and hands, straightening bedclothes, beating up pillows or serving rations, etc., I could only pray the Father above, to water the seed sown, that it might be fruitful and not return unto Him void. I believe that many of the boys gave their hearts to God in those days, for they promised almost to a man, to take the Saviour with them and live as **He would have them live by His Grace.**

CHAPTER XII

Off Duty

IT IS not the most pleasant task to recall the three weeks spent nursing the grippe and a frost-bitten foot, when there was so much to be done in the wards, but as I am recounting happenings as they occurred, I will have to put it all in.

Meeting Captain Warren in the office one morning, after a painful night with the foot, I could not evade the close scrutiny of his eyes.

He arose upon my entrance, and covering me with a glance remarked, "My dear girl, we shall have you laid up in a few days, if you do not take a few days off and rest yourself." "Miss Emmet is getting onto things now and can manage the ward alone for a few days." "Do be prudent, and do not let me have to add 'Nurse Lee' to my bouquet of patients." This advice was delivered in a paternal manner, by the elder surgeon in the ward I had

now been in for three weeks, a kind hearted gentleman, as unlike Lieut .Boggs as day is from night. From his kind solicitude he seemed to consider me a frail young blossom, that needed much cherishing, instead of a small, but robust and healthy spinster, who had been knocking about the world for some thirty odd years.

His advice had been offered by several persons for a week and refused by me with the obstinacy with which my sex is sometimes so richly gifted. But the last few hours had developed several surprising internal and external phenomena, which impressed upon me the fact that if I didn't make a masterly retreat very soon, I should tumble down somewhere and have to be borne ignominiously from the field. My head felt like a wooden bucket from the cold I had acquired, my feet had a tendency to cleave to the floor; the walls at times undulated in a most disagreeable manner; people looked unnaturally big, and the very bottles in the medicine case appeared to dance desisively before my eyes. Taking all these things into consideration, while blinking stupidly at Captain Warren, I resolved to retire gracefully, if I must; so, with a valedictory to the boys, a private lecture to Miss Emmet, who was new in the ward, and a fervent wish that I

could take off my body and work in my soul, I mournfully ascended the steps to the conveyance which had been summoned to take me to the nurses' quarters, and nurse Lee was reported "off duty."

For a day or two I managed to appear at meals; for: "The human grub must eat till the butterfly is ready to break loose," and no one had time to carry food such a distance, while it was possible for me to go to it. Far be it from me to add another affliction or reproach to that enduring black soul the cook Sallie, for compared to her predecessor, she was a horn of plenty; but I put it to any candid mind —is not the following bill of fare susceptible of improvement, without plunging the nation madly into debt? The three meals were "pretty much of a sameness," and consisted of beef (when we had it) evidently put down for the men of '61; pork, just in from the woods, army bread, composed of sawdust and saleratus; butter three times a week, and salt as if churned by Lot's wife; stewed prunes, so much like preserved beetles, that only those devoid of imagination could partake thereof with relish; coffee, mild and muddy or strong and bitter, tea tasting like Senna tea, animated and unconscious to any approach to clearness. Variety being the

spice of life, a small pinch of the article would have been appreciated by the hungry, hard working sisterhood; one of whom, though accustomed to plain fare, soon found herself reduced to bread and water; having an inborn repugnance to the fat of the land, and the salt of the earth.

It is only just to relate that this state of affairs lasted but a short time, in fact no longer than our neat, bonny and capable dietitians arrived upon the scene. They took the culinary establishment in hand and worked such magic that no one would have believed it to be the same place a few weeks later. We were soon finding ourselves transplanted "as it were" from a bare Sodom and Gamorrah sort of place to a land "flowing with milk and honey."

Very soon after leaving the ward, I discovered I had no appetite, and cut the bread and butter interests almost entirely, trying the exercise and sun cure instead but the lame foot handicapped the exercise, so I had to be contented by sitting upon my bed and occupying the time by reading, writing or knitting. I longed to get out and explore the woods and surrounding country, but my foot was so swollen and painful, I could not venture

far in a community one-half of whose male population seemed to be taking the other half to the guard house,—but every morning I took a brisk run in one direction or another; for the February days were as mild as spring. Finally the foot getting no better at last balked and would not permit my using it at all. The surgeon who examined it suggested an operation, but not being in favor of such procedure, I took it in hand and began to poultice it myself, obeying the surgeon's injunction to keep off of it. With the help of several kind-hearted nurses, we soon brought it around to where I could hobble about on crutches. Our Chief being laid up at the same time from a fall on the ice, a fortnight previous to this gave us many a pleasant chat and visit together.

But some of those days shut up in the dormitory with no voice, spirits or books, was not a holiday by any means. Finding meals a humbug, I stopped away altogether, trusting that if this sparrow was of any worth, the Lord would not let it fall to the ground. Like a flock of friendly ravens, my sister nurses fed me, not only with food for the body, but kind words for the mind; and soon from being half starved, I found myself so be-teaed and be-toasted, petted and served, that I was

nearly killed with kindness, in spite of cough, headache, a painful consciousness of my pleura and pain in my swollen foot. Not being able these days to help in the care of fleshly bodies, arms and legs, I solaced myself by mending cotton ones, and as I sat sewing at my window, watched the moving panorama that passed below; amusing myself with taking notes of the most striking figures in it. Long trains of army trucks kept up a perpetual rumble from morning till night. Ambulances rattled to and fro with busy surgeons or nurses taking an airing or convalescents going to town or over to the camp. There were more mules here than I had ever expected existed, and they were my special delight; an hour's study of a constant succession of them introduced me to many of their characteristics; for instance, the coquettish mule had small feet, a nicely trimmed tassel of a tail, perked up ears, and seemed much given to little tosses of the head, affected skips and prances, and as if he wore the bells, he put on as many airs as any belle. The moral mule was a stout, hard-working creature, always tugging with all his might, often pulling away after the rest had stopped, laboring under the conscientious delusion that food for the entire

army depended upon his private exertions. I respected this style of mule, and had I possesed a juicy turnip, would have pressed it upon him, with thanks for his excellent example. The pathetic mule was, perhaps, the most interesting of all; for though he always seemed to be the smallest, thinnest and weakest, he struggled feebly along, head down, coat muddy and rough, eye spiritless and sad, his very tail a mortified stump, and the whole beast a picture of meek misery, fit to touch a heart of stone. The jovial mule was a roly poly happy-go-lucky little piece of horse flesh, taking everything easily, from cudgelling to caressing; strolling along with a roguish twinkle of the eye, and if the thing were possible would have had his hands in his pockets, and whistled as he went. If there ever chanced to be an apple-core, a stray carrot or wisp of hay in the gutter, this Happy Hooligan was sure to find it, and none of his mates seemed to begrudge him his bite. I suspected this fellow was the peacemaker, confidant and friend of all the others, for he had a sort of cheer-up-old-boy, I'll-pull-you-through" l o o k, which was exceedingly engaging.

But more interesting than officers, ladies, pigs or mules were my colored brothers and sisters, because so unlike

anything I had ever seen in the North. Here was the genuine article, (this side of Africa). But the sort of creatures generations of slavery had made them had never migrated from the spot where three generations had been born, lived, died—their children had been born and lived, or existed, I should say, trickish, lazy and ignorant, yet kind-hearted, merry tempered, quick to feel and accept the least token of the brotherly love which is slowly teaching the white hand to grasp the black, in this benevolent, broadening, fair-minded land of freedom.

I had not been off duty a week coming in contact with the many and various sized servants about the nurses' home, with the neglected, "devil may care" expression in many of the faces, till it seemed an urgent appeal to leave nursing white bodies, and take some care of these black souls. Much as the lazy boys and saucy girls tormented me, I liked them, and found that any show of interest or friendliness brought out the better traits which live in the most degraded and forsaken of us all.

Companies of soldier boys would pass my window marching, always marching, sometimes in the rain, their slickers glistening like silk, and their army shoes

soaked and despattered with mud. It was during these weeks that our camp was visited by an epidemic of that dreaded disease meningitis. A very strict quarantine was placed over the hospital, camp and the town of A—. No one was allowed to go or come and for one whole month all public gatherings were prohibited, even the Y. M. C. A. Hut was closed, where twice a week we attended services conducted by our able, kind-hearted chaplain, Lieut. Arnold.

At the end of three weeks my foot coming on so nicely and all traces of the grippe having disappeared, I could not listen to the accounts of the busy times in the wards and remain away longer, so one day going to the Chief I asked permission to go back to work, and to be permitted to work in one of the wards for meningitis. This was on Thursday, and she told me I could not go to work before the following Monday A. M. I contented myself in the meantime by reading, and writing letters and on Sunday evening went with some other nurses for a stroll around the grounds, and along the railroad which was a favorite promenade. It was the last days of February, the air was balmy and spring-like, and grass was everywhere peeping out of the ground. The pine trees

which had never lost their fresh green color all through the winter looked beautiful in the sunlight, and the large beautiful palm leaves all through the woods, made it seem like paradise to one who had been cooped up inside for nearly ten days. I thanked the Dear Lord in my heart for permitting me to be able to be about again, enjoying the beauties of nature and the prospect of soon being back at my work where everyone was needed so badly. I was delighted on Monday A. M. when Miss Alberts, our Chief, assigned me to a convalescent ward for meningitis. I was here one month and if I had longed for an opportunity to "do things" for the poor sick helpless boys before, my wants were gratified, for though this was a convalescent ward, scarcely one of the forty patients was able to walk or help himself. It was a most pitiful sight to behold, what had been strong stalwart men, reduced to a mere skeleton, with perhaps the loss from paralysis, of an arm or limb, or perhaps the hearing gone or eyes weak, and even blind in some cases. But I shall not dwell on, or go into details here, suffice it to say that many of these patients never left the ward and those who did after many weeks, were all wrecks of their former selves.

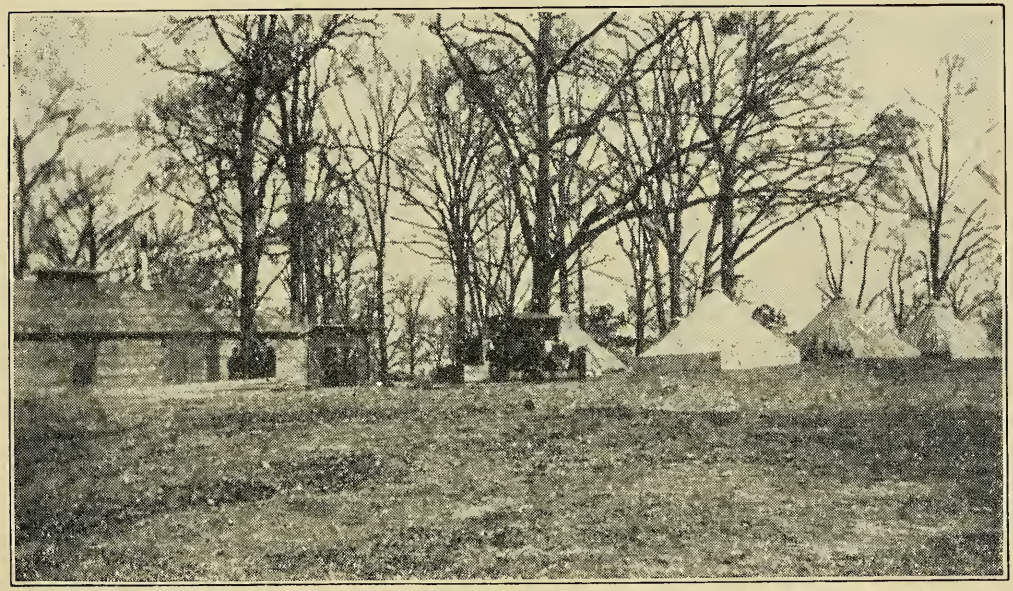
When my month of work in this ward

was finished, it was by this time my turn at night duty, and it fell my lot to spend my first night duty in the meningitis ward proper. As I look back over that month's experience, it seemed one long nightmare of howling, screaming, cursing, swearing, moaning, groaning, suffering humanity. The only consolation was that they were delirious most of the time and knew naught of their sufferings. There were three nurses and three corps boys on duty through the night here, while a doctor spent his time between this and the convalescent ward next door. We were all kept busy all of the night long for each patient seemed to be obsessed in his delirium with a desire to promenade through the ward, so it was necessary for each attendant as well as the nurses to keep vigilant watch at all times to keep them in their beds.

We lived in isolation during this month, and tents were put up in the rear of the nurses' home for those working in these wards. My tentmate was a lovable, sweet natured girl from Boston, Massachusetts. All the girls in isolation loved to come to our tent, as we had it fixed up so cozy and home-like. A soldier boy started fires in the little funnel shaped stoves in all of the tents in the mornings, and when we arose

it was warm and comfortable in each tent. I enjoyed life in our little tent more than in the dormitory. We even had electric lights with a rose shade! Our shoe rack was made of stout cord fastened to the board wall with nails and we even had pictures on the wall and rugs on the floor. The month soon flew by, the terrible epidemic abated, quarantine was lifted and we were all happy once more. I have come to believe that the majority of people are compelled to find happiness as best they may, in doing what they cannot altogether help, and in choosing what appears to be the lesser of two evils, though it may ultimately turn out a real good. While others who always seem to have their own way, in everything, as aids for procuring their own happiness, oftener fail in doing so, than those for whom destiny seems to have marked out their course of life.

By the time the little tents were vacated the new nurses' home, which had been in process of construction for weeks, was completed and I will confess that it was, with a real pang of regret, that I moved from the dear little tent that had grown to be such a cozy home, even to a lovely room in the new barracks. I was very happy over the room which was assigned



Tents were erected at the back of the nurses' quarters. See page 159

to me, however, as it looked out upon the front veranda, and from my window I could see away down the road, past the "old home" through the woods, toward the camp. At night when Taps was blown, the sound wafted on the air through the woods was thrilling and impressive. In the morning the revilee at the camp two miles away could be heard through the woods as plainly almost as the "Can't get 'em up" of our own hospital bugler.

As spring passed and summer came on, our work grew lighter, and it was then our Chief advised all who wished to take a short vacation to do so, while they could easily be spared from duty.

It was during the spring months here, that I first beheld the beautiful sweet bay blossoms, and the bloom from the majestic magnolia tree. Some of the blossoms were large as dinner plates. On our hours off duty the nurses enjoyed strolling in the woods, where wild flowers abounded, and the green of the foliage seemed a lovelier green than I had ever beheld before. The place abounded in pretty scenery. There were many picnic parties, and trips to the bathing beach, twenty miles away, so we never lacked for amusement and recreation when off duty those days. Horse

back riding was very popular among those who cared for it.

During the latter part of the summer the Governors of three states came to review the troops at the camp, before they were to be sent overseas. Permission was given to as many nurses as happened to have the hours off, to go over to the camp and enjoy the impressive ceremonies. I happened to be among the lucky number. An ambulance came for us at the appointed time, we had reserved seats very near the Governors, and their staffs, and I shall never forget the impressions of that day as long as I live. Before the troops came by we had ample opportunity to study the distinguished members of the party of Governors near us. The much bebraided, betasselled and beploomed officers, looked like they might have stepped out of some book about Knighthood of olden times. The Governors themselves were plainly dressed except for the high silk hats worn by two of them; the other one wearing a plain fedora, but looking as much the gentleman as his silk hatted companions.

As the boys came marching by, each regiment was led by its own band, and I never expect to see again upon this earth such an impressive sight. Fifty thousand strong, our dear lads marched by, many

of them had been sick under our very care, all looking so manly and fine, marching in perfect step to the music of their band. As we realized what it all meant, our hearts were very sad, so many of those manly forms would remain in foreign lands, and after sailing so bravely away would never more return.

My ward next day was honored by a visit from the very Governors themselves, who were making a tour of the hospital in company with the Commanding officer.

I was surprised, that the Governor I had met on the train, on my way to camp, should remember my face, but he did, and was very cordial as he offered some complimentary remark concerning the appearance of the ward, and the patients therein. Once during the summer we had a talk at the nurses' home from the big General in command of the camp; who had just returned from France. This was the one and only occasion I ever heard of this distinguished gentleman honoring our hospital with his presence.

In August a dear friend, another nurse and myself went for a ten days outing down to the Gulf. It being only a little over one hundred miles away it was not much of a journey, but we enjoyed every moment of the trip. The semi-tropical

sun which had poured down with such intense heat over the camp, seemed to grow shades less warm as we neared the Gulf. The shady, cool palm drives, and lovely drives and walks along the gulf coast with a trip to Lake Champlain, Boloxi and Pass Christian, the salt breeze putting new life into our tired bodies, made new people of us, so when we returned after our brief outing, we took up work again with new zest.

All summer long the letters from my sister in Washington, gave interesting accounts of the Government Hospital being enlarged, and equipped for the many patients being brought back from overseas, hospitals, that put a great desire in my heart, to visit my Nation's Capital, and lend a hand at helping care for those of our boys who had come back sick, maimed and wounded, from the battle fields. My sister's presence in Washington was also a magnet drawing me, so I set about getting a Government transfer from the Southern Base to the Hospital in Washington. My friend and Pal, Miss Bates, declared if I left the camp she would go too, so when we returned from our vacation our transfer was already made out for the middle of September.

CHAPTER XIII

A Unique Experience

THE last two weeks stay at the Southern Base Hospital were memorable indeed. My work during this time was in a ward for **colored** soldiers, and I would not have missed this experience, unique and varied, and so different from anything I had ever experienced, for all the other experiences put together. My first entrance upon this field of work was, I will admit, with a mind filled with some misgivings, and temerity, and I may say that it was with a feeling akin to repugnance that I entered the ward the first day and beheld two long rows of beds, each containing a dusky visaged occupant, whose black face against the white pillows, recalling a picture I have seen somewhere, of a black urchin in the middle of a large bed, whose little black face stood out in relief against the huge white pillows behind it, and, underneath the words, "far from the maddening crowd."

Here were faces resembling all species of the hairy tribe, from the Gorilla down. But after working among them for a short while, I soon learned that they too were just a lot of sick, helpless, pitiful humanity, more touching in their helplessness and if such a thing could be, even more grateful and appreciative for the least kindness shown them, or thought taken for their comfort.

There were thirty patients in the ward, and though as I have said, we had all sorts of peculiar visaged ones, there were also some fine specimens of their race, but all were humble, meek and lowly, and almost to a man, very religious. It was very interesting to listen to them at times. Those who were able ate their meals at a large table on the porch at the end of the ward. They never partook of their meal without first returning thanks to their Heavenly Father for His many blessings, amidst the hardships of hospital life. The prayers which poured forth from those dusky throats were wonderful to hear. On Sunday and Wednesday there was preaching, for among the patients was one Reverend Johnson, who was a convalescent and preached to the boys who were able to go out to the porch where the meetings were held. I never had the opportunity of at-

tending any of these meetings, as it took place after the day's work was over in the ward, but if the sermons were delivered with the same unction and fervor that his prayers were, then it must have been a treat indeed to hear him.

There are those who think meanly of prayer, and never bow the knee to the giver of all good from one year's end to another. Such persons would do well to imitate our lowly brethren, who in many instances show more of that humble Christ-like piety than many so-called Christians of the higher races. They sometimes ask, "what profit should we have if we pray to the Almighty?" Job 21-15. The true answer is, "much every way" for

"There is an eye that never sleeps,
Beneath the wings of night;
There is an ear that never shuts
When sink the beams of light.

There is an arm, that never tires
When human strength gives way;
There is a love that never fails
When earthly loves decay.

That eye is fixed on seraph throngs,
That arm upholds the sky;
That ear is filled with Angel songs;
That love is throned on high.

But there's a power which man can wield
When mortal aid is vain;
That eye, that ear, that love to reach;
That listening ear to gain.

That power is Prayer, which soars on high
Through Jesus, to the throne;
And moves the hand which moves the world,
To bring salvation down.

It was the desire of one and all of the colored brethren to possess a New Testament, so one day I walked over to the Y. M. C. A. and asked the man in charge for some testaments for our ward. Having about a dozen on hand, for distribution among the soldiers, he gave them to me, and returning to the ward, I presented them to those who seemed most desirous of obtaining one. They were delighted, and asked me to write their names in each man's book, for many of them could neither read nor write.

At mealtime, one day, shortly after this, I missed one of the most devout brethren, and of course a search was instigated at once, when just as Parson Johnson had finished saying grace, in rushed Riley, panting and out of breath from his endeavor to get back to the ward before being missed. Upon inquiry as to where he

had been, this was his reply: "You knows Miss, dat black rascal whut done slept next to me, he done gone back to camp s'mon'i'n?" "Well dat good-fo'-nothin' rascal, he done stole ma test'ment." "I jes' caught him in time." "He wuz right in the act of goin' off in de amb-lance. "He done see's me, comin,' and reaches ma' book to me fo any dem Lef'tenants sees what I cum fo." "So I jes lets him alone, and cum on back to ma' dinnah." And with a broad grin and a hearty slap on his breast pocket, he added, "But I'se all right I'se got ma' test'ment agin."

We had one very peculiar specimen in this ward. I was for some days a little in awe of him; as he would neither talk, eat, lie down, or sleep. But sat staring stolidly into space, like some huge statue of a Gorilla. His expressionless eyes looked straight ahead, without one iota of emotion or interest in his surroundings, even though corps boys, patients, doctors, and all around him, tried by every persuasive means to obtain some inkling of notice from him. I thought to catch him off his guard, by preparing his food with care and delicacy and serving it to him as though he were a king, but to no purpose. He sat indifferent to all appeals, baffling the doctors, a sight pitiful enough to touch

a heart of stone. He was taken away later to a psychopathic ward, and I never learned what befell him afterward.

There were three Northern nurses worked in this ward, some of the Southern girls thought it degrading to serve and wait upon the colored race, and flatly refused to be placed in the ward for them. I soon come to feel that it was just as important and ennobling a task to care for and help those poor pitiful creatures, as to care for the white men, and indeed in many instances the blacks seemed superior in gentle kindness and tender thoughtfulness toward one another, than some of the white fellows.

I cared for them at first with some such feeling as I might have shown toward a ward full of Newfoundland dogs, or black bears, but I soon come to feel that they were human souls, though black outwardly, many of them were as "white" inside, whose acts were as kindly and christian as any race of any color.

When it came time for my departure from this ward, some of the sick boys heard I was going away to "Washington," and there were tears of sincere sorrow in their eyes as they said good bye, and told me they were sorry I was going away. I felt their gratitude and their sorrow at

my departure was as great a compliment as one could have wished. I told them if we never met here, I hoped we would meet again in the "Sweet bye and bye," and I was sincere in saying it.

I many times resolve, by the Grace of God, upon a determination to keep steadily in view the existence of a future state, where all pure in heart and good people, as well as our friends and loved ones have gone, a consideration which bears in its consequences upon every iota of our actions, believing that our every act has vast influence over our moral undertakings, and of which I acknowledge myself many times, wickedly forgetful.

Having spent much prayer over the matter of changing my location, there seemed no hindrance to the move, so in company with my friend, Miss Bates, I took my departure from the camp hospital on September 9, 1918, having spent just nine months at the Base Hospital in the South.

CHAPTER XIV

A Pleasant Journey.

TO describe our pleasant three days journey from the Southland, up to the Eastern city, where the Nation's capital sits in smiling repose, would be to write another story, so I will not attempt it at this time. We met many congenial travelers, for it being war time, people were going to their different fields of action, for the pursuance of their various duties. A regiment of soldiers to Camp Meade in Maryland, a crowd of Aviators from a flying field in Florida, being mustered to the coast, thence on overseas, from whence I can but hope they all, but fear many never returned. Nurses going to their various fields of duty, Government clerks hastening to Washington to take their place among the throngs of those patriotic souls already there, doing their bit in the thousands of offices, and helping on the country's need at this time as best they could.

Upon arriving in Washington, and finding the hospital to which we were going, situated ten miles from the city, we decided it was a good time to see something of the place we had heard so many wonderful and glowing accounts of, since childhood, and this day being sort of a holiday, between giving up our old work and assuming the duties at the new hospital and anxious to see the sister I had not seen for nine long busy months, we took a car and visited many places of note during the day, toward evening, when she should be at leisure, driving out to sister Ruth's place of abode. After a happy repast together she accompanied us to the hospital where we were to pursue our duties as Army nurses as long as our country had need of us.

The chief nurse, a tall gray-haired woman from Canada, greeted us cordially, and assigned us to our quarters in Barracks No. 1, a handsome brick structure whose luxuriously furnished interior seemed to us a palace, coming as we had from the crude temporary building at the camp.

An incident occured while visiting the capital building the day before, which I will relate here.

My colleague, a girl twice the avoirdupois of myself, decided after traveling

over what seemed miles of stone corridor, to await the crowd at the foot of one of the massive stone stairs, after resting there a bit to rejoin us again as we came that way. The crowd of sightsee'rs forged on, up the stair, following the guide who was busily engaged in giving an interesting account of all points of interest, as he pointed them out to us. We had gone through Senate Chamber, House of Representatives, down another stair and corridor through Statuary Hall when I discovered to my dismay, that we were leaving the building and my friend, Miss Bates, was not in the party. I spoke to the driver on reaching the car and he, kindly gentleman that he was, suggested while another man drove the remainder of the party to the Congressional Library (which was a short distance) to return with me to the capital to search for the one "numbered amongst the missing." We retraced the ground we had covered in our earlier rounds, from garret to basement, but Miss Bates was nowhere to be seen. I begun to picture myself going on life's journey alone, while she languished until life became extinct in some one of these numerous stone grottoes of which the Capital seemed so full. After we were thoroughly convinced that she was no where in

the building, at least not visible to the eye of flesh, we gave up and I, very sad at heart,, worried and perplexed, accompanied the guide back to the Library, where upon reaching, the first person I laid eyes on was the smiling, happy countenance of Miss Bates, awaiting me at the entrance. We had quite a laugh over the episode, though a few moments before it had appeared very alarming to me. She had gotten tired waiting at the stairs, for of course we never came back that way, and had strolled on over to the Library which was the next stop.

My assignment to duty the next day was in the main building, a large brick, which was one of the original buildings of this Government Hospital, which had been in existence as a home for sick soldiers since the Civil War. This was a very handsome building, thoroughly equipped with all conveniences that modern invention could produce. Hardwood floors, polished so slick that one was in danger of injury at any time from a fall, woodwork and beds of a snowy appearance, windows polished till they shone like diamonds.

The long clean and airy wards were fully appreciated by Nurse Lee coming from wards with tar-like oil all over the floors, which clung to the shoes, leaving a grease

spot wherever one set their foot. As I watched the proceedings, I recalled my former tribulations, and contrasted the two hospitals in a way that would have caused my summary dismissal from the former had it been known earlier. Here order, method, common sense and liberality seemed to rule in a style that did one's heart good to see. While at the camp, in some of the wards, disorder, discomfort and bad management reduced things to a condition which I despair of describing. The presiding genius over this particular department was an "Army Nurse" of several generations. Like so many of these long suffering individuals, the years spent in keeping a military establishment up to the mark, had seemingly dried up all milk of human kindness, that ever had existed, and rendered a being almost mechanical in precision, with no mercy for man, woman, or beast, if such contended with the strict and formal rules and regulations of Army life; until the boys expression of "hard boiled" became in some instances, very appropriate. Deliver me from the possibility of ever becoming a hard tyranical, unsympathetic "Military" woman! The work here was very interesting. Being a department of bone surgery, we had to do with hun-

dreds of cases of bone defection, the patients coming to our department for examination, correction, etc., from all over the hospital, as well as the surrounding camps of Meade, Meggs and Fort Myer.

There were two very high classed bone specialists here, which were the surgeons who did the largest bulk of the bone work. Major B. from New York State and Capt. R. from Massachusetts. The whole morning was given to dressing wounds, the work sometimes being continued into the afternoon. It wasn't a festive scene, by any means. For Major B. whose aid I was constituted, fell to work with a vigor which soon convinced me that I was a weaker vessel, though nothing would have induced me to confess it then.

He had served in the Spanish-American war, and seemed to regard a dilapidated body very much as I should have regarded a damaged garment; and slipping into his gown, whipped open a very unpleasant looking case of instruments, cutting, sawing, patching and piercing with the enthusiasm of an accomplished surgical seamstress; explaining the process, in scientific terms, to the patient, meantime, which of course, was immensely cheering, and comfortable. There was an uncanny sort

of fascination in watching him as he peered and probed into the mechanism of those wonderful bodies, whose mysteries he understood so well.

The more intricate the wound, the better he liked it. A poor private with both legs off and shot through the lungs, possessed more attractions for him than half a dozen Generals slightly scratched in some "masterly retreat," and had any one appeared in small pieces requesting to be put together again, he would have considered it a special dispensation.

Major B. was a capital surgeon and a kindly man, though I sometimes feared his profession blunted his sensibilities, and perhaps rendered him indifferent to the sight of pain. He was not wilfully hard or cruel, but through long acquaintance with many of the ills flesh is heir to, had acquired a somewhat trying habit of regarding a man and his wound as separate institutions, and seemed rather annoyed that the former should express any opinion upon the latter, or claim any right in it, while under his care. He had a way, after a bandage was removed, of giving a limb a comprehensive sort of clutch, which though no doubt entirely scientific, was rather startling than soothing and highly

objectionable as a means of preparing nerves for any painful ordeal. He sometimes expected the patient to assist in small operations, as he termed them, and to restrain all demonstrations during the process. "Here, my boy, just hold it this way, while I look into it a bit," he said one day to a little sergeant, putting a wounded arm into the keeping of a sound one, and proceeding to poke about among bits of bone, and the visible muscles in a red and black chasm, made by some infernal machine of the shot and shell description.

Poor Davis held on like grim death, ashamed to show fear before a woman, till it grew more than he could bear in silence, and, after a few smothered groans, he looked at me imploringly, as if to say, "I wouldn't ma'am, if I could help it," and fainted quietly away.

The Major looked up, gave a compassionate sort of cluck and prodded away more busily than ever, with a nod at me and a brief—"never mind" "be so good as to hold this till I finish." I obeyed, cherishing the while a strong desire to insinuate a few of his own disagreeable knives and scissors into him, and see how he liked it. A very disrespectful and ridiculous fancy of course, for he was doing all

that could be done, and the arm prospered finely in his hands.

But the human mind is prone to prejudice, and though a personable man, speaking French like a born "Parla Voo," and whipping off legs like an animated guillotine, I must confess to a sense of relief when he was ordered overseas, and suspect that several of the boys would have faced a Hun battery with less trepidition than they did Major B. when he came briskly in on his morning round.

As if to give us the pleasure of a contrast, Captain R. succeeded him, who, I think suffered more in giving pain than did his patient in enduring it, for he often paused to ask: "Do I hurt you?" and seeing his solicitude, the boys invariably answered "not much, go ahead doctor," though the lips that uttered this aimable fib might be white with pain as they spoke.

Over the dressing of some of the wounds we used to carry on conversations upon subjects foreign to the work in hand, that the patient might forget himself in the charms of our discourse.

Hallowe'en was spent in this way: The Captain strapping the little sergeant's arm, I holding the extension light, while all three laughed and talked as if any-

where but in a hospital ward, except when the chat was broken by a long "oh!" from the Sergeant, an abrupt request from the doctor to, "hold the light a little higher please," or an encouraging "most through sergeant," from Nurse Lee.

CHAPTER XIV

Influenza

ABOUT this time my days were saddened by the departure of my friend, Miss Bates, to Camp H. which being swooped down upon by a violent epidemic of Influenza, and having a shortage of nurses, was reinforced by twenty of our nurses, Miss Bates being among them.

After the epidemic subsided she was sent on overseas, and though we have kept up a regular correspondence, I have not seen her since her return from France, but continually look forward to our meeting once more and a happy visit together some time in the future.

It was well for me that my days were so filled with work, for it lessened, perhaps, the lonliness of her absence. I should have said nights, rather than days perhaps, for I went on night duty in a ward of Influenza patients, and being the only nurse, with two attendants in a ward of fifty and a greater part of the time sixty

men, sick enough to die, was not conductive to a habit of spending much time bemoaning the departure of a friend, be she ever so necessary to one's happiness. Even when off duty, there was little time to spend in thought, for weary from the long strenuous night in the ward, the shining hours were taken up by sleep, that great restorer of tired and weary bodies, until it was time to go on again.

But being fond of the night side of nature, "night duty" was one of my specialties during training, so here I had an excellent opportunity for indulging in my favorite pastime of "owling" with all the horros and thrills imaginable accompanying it, to my heart's content.

My ward was divided into three parts, two rooms and a very long porch, where those cases having a tendency toward pneumonia were placed.

Wherever the sickest or most helpless man chanced to be, there I held my watch, when not busily engaged upon the aforementioned charts, which required an alarming amount of one's time and which I begrudged them every moment spent thereon. I often visited the other rooms to see that the general watchman or corps boys were doing their duty, and not asleep

and to get fresher air than the rooms sometimes afforded.

One of the harmless ghosts, who bore me company during the haunted hours here, was Andrews, my colleague and corps man, whom I regarded with a certain awe; for though so much together, I never fairly saw his face, and, but for his legs, should never have recognized him, as we seldom met by day. His little round head set upon as it were a pair of very long legs, gave me the idea of a preambulating clothespin, for his body being short rotund, and done up in a grey army sweater, helped to complete one's imaginative propensity toward this conclusion. The collar to his sweater hid the lower part of his face, his hat brim the upper, and all I ever discovered was a pair of sleepy eyes, and a very mild voice.

Another goblin who appeared to me, was the other faithful attendant, who being a kind-hearted soul, was often attending two or three men at a time, weak and wandering as babies, after the fever had gone. When not thus engaged, the aimable creature beguiled the watches of the night, by brewing jorums of a harmless, but nauseating beverage he called cocoa, and insisted on sharing with me.

Overtaking me with a great bowl of

something resembling mud soup, rich in an all-pervading flavor of molasses and scorched milk. Such an amount of good will, and neighborly kindness also went into the mess, that I never could find the heart to refuse, but always received it with thanks and hypocritically whipped it into the sink at the first opportunity, the instant he departed. It was a strange life—asleep half the day, exploring the surroundings the other half, and all night hovering like a massive cherubim, in a red sweater, over the slumbering sons of men. The snores alone, were quite a study, varying from the mild snif to the stentorian snort, which startled the echoes and hoisted the performer erect to accuse his neighbor of the deed, magnanimously forgive him, and wrapping the drapery of his couch about him, lie down to vocal slumber.

I would have given much to have possessed the art of sketching from life, for many of the faces became wonderfully interesting when unconscious.

Often the roughest grew young and pleasant when sleep smoothed the lines away, letting the real nature assert itself; many almost seemed to speak and I learned to know these men better by night than through any intercourse by day. A few

talked busily and one young boy sang sweetly, though no persuasions could win a note from him by day, and several depended upon being told what they had talked of in the morning.

Sentinels tramped round us all night long, their rifles glittering in the Autumn moonlight, as they walked or stood before the doors, straight and silent, as figures of stone.

Wandering up and down these lower rooms (for ours was a two-story building, there being the same proportioned ward upstairs) I often heard cries from above, steps hurrying to and fro, saw surgeons passing up, or men coming down carrying a stretcher, where lay a long white figure, whose face was shrouded and whose fight was done.

An incident which occurred about this time shows how the pathetic and comic went hand in hand that one sometimes stopped and wondered at the seeming callousness of life.

I had taken my station by a Virginia boy whose fever was higher than usual this night, his eyes restless, his head never still. It was after midnight, the "O. D." had made his rounds, the corps boy had watched by his bed while I had taken a

few bites of refreshment and had now gone to his supper at the mess hall, and as I sat by my patient, trying to soothe his poor distracted brain by a constant application of wet towels to his burning forehead, he was slowly wearying himself into fitful intervals of quietude, when in one of these pauses, a curious sound arrested my attention. Looking up I saw a one-legged phantom hopping nimbly down the room, and going to meet it I recognized a big athlete from New Hampshire, who had lost one limb at Chatteau Thierry and whose fever had taken a turn for the worse, and set him literally tripping on the light, fantastic toe "toward home" as he blandly informed me, touching his hat in a military manner, said hat forming a striking contrast to the severe simplicity of the rest of his **undress** uniform. Balancing himself on one leg, like a meditative stork, he plunged into an animated discussion of the war, the Kaiser, French wines and Enfield rifles, regardless of any suggestions of mine, as to the propriety of returning to bed.

Anything more supremely ridiculous can hardly be imagined than this figure, pajama suit of striped black and white, the empty leg dangling limply, its one foot covered with a big brown sock, a dingy

hat sat rakishly askew on its head, and placid satisfaction beaming in his countenance, as it flourished a granite cup in one hand, an old shoe in the other, calling them mess kit and canteen, while it skipped and fluttered in the most unearthly fashion. What to do with the fellow I didn't know; Andrews was still at supper, and if I went to find him the preambulator might festoon himself out of the window, set himself on fire, or do some of his neighbors a mischief. The other attendant was sleeping like the "Rock of Gibraltar," and nothing short of pins would rouse him.

Still declaiming, in a fine flow of eloquence, the demented gentleman hopped on, blind and deaf to my graspings and entreaties, and I was about to slam the door in his face and run for help when a second and saner phantom came to the rescue, in the person of a big Russian, who spoke no English, but devined the crisis, and put an end to it by bundling the lively monaped into his bed, like a baby, with an authoritative command to "stay put," which received added weight by being delivered in an odd conglomeration of Russian and French accompanied by warning wags of a head decorated with a gray outing flannel night cap with an imposing peak at the

top, like the hood of a Monk. Rather exhausted by his exertions, the one time athlete subsided, and after an irrepressible laugh together, though unable to understand a word of each other's speech, my Russian ally and myself returned to our places and if not quiet, at least peace reigned throughout the ward the remainder of the night.

CHAPTER XV

Another Phase of War

THERE was plenty of variation in the work at this hospital, for though I had expected when entering the army, to occupy my time in nursing sick soldiers only, I found myself not long after this acting as night special nurse to one of my own unfortunate sisters of the profession, who had entered the Red Cross nursing service at one of the Southern Base Hospitals, and being of a high-strung nervous temperament, had in trying to adjust herself to the unnatural and strenuous conditions surrounding Army life, lost her mental balance and had been sent to the large Government hospital at Washington for treatment, and it was hoped she would regain once more her mental efficiency and be able to return to her Western home.

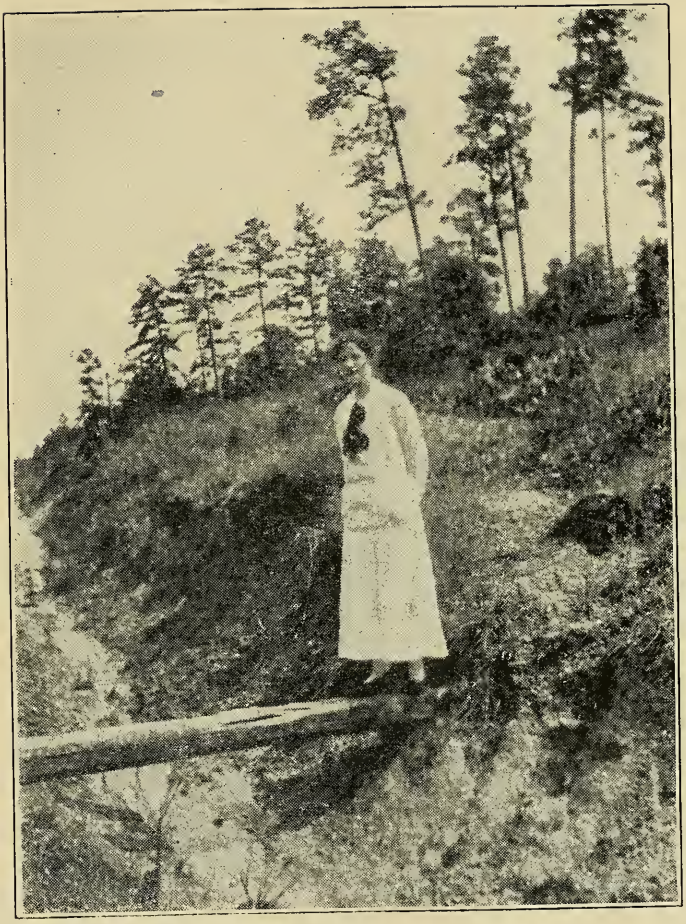
I had what I considered some nerve-racking experiences during the two weeks attendance upon this patient

through the long watches of the night alone, for it happened the night I took up my first watch with her, she was moved from the room in the officers' ward, where other nurses were on duty and other patients could be seen occasionally, to a building quite remote from the other part of the hospital, occupied by doctors offices during the day time but silent and tomb-like as the grave through the long hours of the night. Our only neighboring building being the psychopathic ward, did not add to the cheerfulness of the place by any means, for all through the doleful hours of the night could be heard the moans and hideous shrieks of the demented unfortunates who were imprisoned therein.

To add to the gloom of that first night with an insane patient, I was hailed and greeted by some of my fellow nurses as I met them coming off duty as I was going on, by such remarks as the following: "Good bye Nurse Lee,I sure would hate to be in your shoes," and Oh! Miss L. she has been simply terrible today, no one could manage her, nearly killed Miss B. etc. Such remarks were not the most encouraging or comforting to one who had as yet had very little dealings with insane people aside from a few D.Ts., D.Fs. and

neurasthenics on different occasions throughout my nursing career. But screwing up my courage to the top notch and calling upon my Friend above to see me through, I took hold of the situation and finally came out victorious I believe, for from the first the patient seemed to form a liking for me, in her more rational moments, and till the day I parted company with her seemed to manifest great confidence in what I did and said, though my first night with her she nearly frightened the wits out of me.

The only person inhabiting our lonely exile through the night time was a night sergeant who slept in an office quite a distance from our room down the corridor. I was to call him should I have need of help at any time during the night. I grimly consoled myself with the thought that this woman who was thrice my size would have time to scalp, tar and feather me had she so chosen, ere my cries could awaken my valliant protector from the stentorian echoes resounding throughout the building which issued from his door. The only mirror of any size our suite had access to was in a bathroom some twelve yards down the hall, necessitating much travel back and forth a good part of the time, for like some more of her sex who



The place abounded in pretty scenery.
See page 161.

The place abounded in pretty scenery.
See page 161.

with more reason in their heads and less reason for so doing, this woman evinced an uncontrolable desire to primp and fix and comb at her hair, meanwhile never removing her eyes from her own face in the mirror. It being my method to allow her what privileges I could, I permitted her to do as her fancy inclined so long as it was in bounds and trotted meekly along at her side watching her for an hour at a time, trying her hair in every conceivable style known to the feminine mind. She brooked no interference when planted before the mirror, comb in hand as she violently wielded the hair brush and comb as though her life depended upon getting it done at a given time, and no sooner was the elaborate coiffeur finished than down it came to begin all over again with some altogether different style of arrangement. After watching this process until it begun to tell upon the nerves of Nurse L, as well as the patient and feeling uncomfortable from the chilliness of this bathroom in a long cold hall, I decided that if I was to become mistress of this situation the time to assume control was at the very beginning, so speaking to my patient with as much kindness as I could command, but with no uncertain sound, I told her she must finish her toilet at once, as the room

was chilly and I did not wish to remain longer away from our room. She violently threw both comb and brush on the floor with much force, slammed the door shut and wheeling as quickly as a cat can leap, planted both strong hands upon my shoulders, almost knocking my feet from under me, and stared wildly into my face and could as easily have strangled me to death had she chosen, for the strength with which she had thrown her hands upon my shoulders showed me that strong women that she was I would be as putty in her hands should she choose to use violence toward me. Nevertheless I pluckily stood my ground and even smiled I believe as I looked at her a second before turning my face aside with a pretended yawn as I asked her to excuse me, all the while my knees were knocking together beneath me and my hair felt as though it were standing on end. I did not wish her to discover my fright as I admonished her to get a hustle on herself now as I was cold and wanted to go back to the room and retire, and pretended to be very sleepy. I chose a way of talking to her as though she were a rational being, instead of one out of her mind, and whether this method had any influence over her condition or not I do not know, but it did have a comforting ef-

fect upon my own nerves as I thought how nice it would be if she were really as sane as I was pretending. I come to fancy my mode of treatment did help for she often told me that I seemed to calm her, and that she did not feel half so "crazy" when I was with her, (for she knew she was not right), but seemed to have no control over her imagination most of the time. She did not pursue her attempt at trying to frighten me, but remarked on our way back to the room "you are not afraid of me, are you Miss Lee?" I gave a fairly good imitation of a laugh as I thought of my fright a few moments ago, but replied, "I see nothing whatever to be afraid of, why should I be afraid?" "You are simply a little nervous and wrought up perhaps, but when you are thoroughly rested and built up with nourishing food you will be yourself again I am quite sure. Meanwhile as we are to depend upon one another for amusement and comfort for awhile, we must begin by being as pleasant and agreeable as we can, don't you think so?" I asked curious to see what her reply would be.

She gave a little hysterical laugh as she answered, I think you know how to manage me all right. At times she would undertake to command me, and wield the su-

premacy but on such occasions I assumed authority, and would tell her that though I wanted to be kind to her as I could, when she took a turn of this kind obstinate and morose, that I would not yield one iota and that I was the Commanding officer of this Brigade. We usually ended up by having a good laugh together, for strange to say she never seemed to lose a keen sense of humor, which is far from being a general characteristic of an insane person.

She was worse during the day and after two weeks it was decided by the powers that be to send her to an institution for the insane twenty miles away. I felt very sorry when I learned of this, for though she was by no means a rational person, I did not consider her condition bad enough for her to be sent to this place, for as I believed, could she have been removed to some quiet place, say in the country, with pleasant surroundings and kind treatment, I believe she would have again regained her equilibrium mentally and once more become a happy as well as useful member of society.

I had several letters from her after this, thanking me for all my kindness to her and requesting me to write her father in the West as to her whereabouts, as I promptly did, and hope he soon came

to take her home, for as I thought during my short visit there, that should a perfectly sane person have to take up their abode in such a place, as an inmate, I doubt if they would long remain sane in that bedlam of noises from the screaming, howling and moaning coming from the windows on all sides. It is needless to say that this part of my army nursing was very, very sad, and brought to my mind a realizing sense of a phase of war that I had not even dreamed of before.

It was my disagreeable duty to accompany this girl, in company with her day special, also two sergeants of the hospital corps, to the institution for the insane across the city, for as the Chief nurse said when awakening me from my peaceful slumbers at midday, she would not go one step unless her night nurse sanctioned the move and accompanied her. Upon arriving at our destination and seeing my patient as far as was possible comfortably settled in her new home (if such a place could be called home) I learned, while in conversation with the doctor in charge of the institution, who was a woman from my own state, that the asylum was practically filled with officers, men and nurses since the war begun, who had gone down in the maelstrom of one of life's greatest

woes, insanity. A sickening sense of the horror of war with all its multitude of suffering and woe overcame me for awhile and as I returned to the hospital I felt I should always be a sadder and wiser woman for having had the unpleasant experience above mentioned. As Nurse Lee brushed her raven locks preparatory to retiring that night she did not wonder at the numerous gray hairs which a few months previous had been totally absent, but which were creeping in among the black tresses very rapidly, for 'tis a known fact that sad and wearying scenes age one more quickly than work. It is with a wish to avoid anything like a tendency to emphasize my own philanthropic zeal, in these notes, but as I am the person who experienced these happenings, the personal pronoun I occurring frequently may cause some to have some such conjecture. I must relate the incidents as they occurred, and it is with no desire to enlarge upon my own part in them, but I will say that in many instances circumstances seemed to help the furtherance of charitable inclinations and make it possible and even easy to do almost the impossible in many matters toward helping the sick, suffering and wounded.

I believe if we make it the one great ob-

ject of life to serve the Redeemer, in doing deeds of kindness and love, we will find that all things help to work out for us what we aim to do, and everything fall in as aids to work out our plans as we would have them, if always in the Lord's will.

While the person who is always finding circumstances working against them and are always battling against "hard luck" as they term it, and sometimes have a grouch on life in general, it is my private opinion that if they would only give their life into the hands of their Saviour and live it in a desire to do His will they would find life much more simple and would find things beginning to shape themselves more in their favor and the scriptures would be fulfilled in their lives, which is written in the Book of James: "That all things work together for good to them that love the Lord and obey His commandments.

CHAPTER XVI

A Happy Crowd

ONE would almost, naturally, think that a ward filled with boys, all of whom had left an arm or limb on foreign fields, would be a rather doleful place to be in, but not so, for the orthopedic ward at this hospital was one of the jolliest places one could find in many a day's journey I feel safe in saying. It was some, one of the boys here I think, who originated the fashion of calling his neighbors by their afflictions instead of their names and I was rather taken a-back by hearing them bandy remarks of this sort, with perfect good humor and much enjoyment of the new game. "How are you this morning toothout?" "Look here, no hand, lend me a stamp, there's a good feller," "I say Miss Lee, may I give 'Eyegone' one of these pears?" etc.

Corporal Sands was christened Wingless because of the loss of an arm in the Argonne. Very fussy about his food was

Corporal S. and much trotting of attendants was necessary when he partook of nourishment. Anything more irresistibly wheedlesome I never saw, and constantly found myself indulging him, like the most weak-minded parent, merely for the pleasure of seeing his blue eyes twinkle, his merry mouth break into a smile and his one hand execute a jaunty salute that was entirely captivating. It was ludricous beyond mention to watch the boys in hilarious sham boxing matches using their artificial hands and arms in the most expressive way giving vehement knocks and cuffs with these detachable members with evidently as much pleasure and satisfaction as though they were real. Sergeant B. walking up to Private L. would exclaim "Hi, there, no toes, how be ye this mornin'?" give us a shake!" While reaching forth the artificial gloved hand with which he was not yet familiar enough himself to have it adjusted properly, whereupon "No toes," (so christened from the loss of the fore part of a foot) gives a vigorous grab and shake which dislodges the member entirely and brings forth a burst of laughter from all those who happen to be looking. I was here but a short time caring for these happy-go-lucky "Hail fellow well met" individuals, and was very sorry to

leave them, but in the Army one has to go when duty calls, and this time duty called me to specialling a Colonel's wife in the main building, through a long and tedious illness. Her recovery being slowly it was Thanksgiving day before she was able to be taken to her home in the city.

She insisted upon my accompanying her and as we sat at meat that evening in the Colonel's home I partook of the first meal eaten in a private dwelling **for almost one year.**

My duties in an officers ward soon afterward convinced me that not all the heroes of the great war were among the enlisted men, sergeants and corporals, for some of these men bore their sufferings with the fortitude and patience of Job.

One Major with both limbs gone was continually cheering on his comrades and causing bursts of merriment by his witty and clever sallies till one would almost get the impression that he found it a great beneficence to be deprived of his limbs.

An adidtion to our ward one day of a Captain from Alabama and two Lieutenants from Tennessee, brought in bleeding and mangled as the result of an aeroplane crash, showed us from the bravery and patience they exhibited in bearing their sufferings that chivalry was not the only vir-

tue a Southern gentleman could boast of.

A Colonel, a member of Pershing's staff, while battling with pneumonia, contracted while on official duty in America, sipped milk from a tablespoon with as much relish and meek quiescence as the humblest private and a realizing sense of the levelling propensity of sickness and death in the army was shown when a Scottish Noble, member of the Embassy and son-in-law to an English Earl, died of pneumonia, was driven through the streets to the morgue upon the floor of an ambulance, with no more pomp or ceremony than was shown Private Jones or Sergeant Smith when a like sudden taking away ended all earthly reviews.

Late in the fall I was called to my Northern home, there to nurse a member of my family through the Flu, and upon returning again to Washington found that not a vestige of likelihood remained of our getting to France at this time, the Armistice having been signed in the meantime, while my name, with twenty others, had been up to go "across" before I left the hospital. Though somewhat disappointing, our hearts were filled with gratitude that the long and bloody conflict was ended, and all our brave lads who had survived the perils and hardships of war would soon be re-

turning to their homes and loved ones once more.

My year in the Army was now nearing its close, the nurses being mustered out of service right along, as the hospital begun to thin out and life once more "flowed along like a song." There were at this time some twelve hundred patients, whereas upon our arrival here and during the epidemic of Influenza, the patients numbered upwards of twenty-five hundred, fifty of whom were nurses. A woman very high in the nursing world passed beyond from pneumonia at this time. Impressive indeed were the ceremonies in the little chapel before her final interment at Arlington, attended by the whole nursing personnel of the hospital, marching military fashion, in their white uniforms, covered by the red lined blue army cape, left flap of each thrown back over the shoulder, showing a dash of color which matched the red cross on each white cap.

Before leaving the service each nurse was requested to return the cape and cap to the Red Cross which had loaned them to us for the duration of our service. The scene above mentioned recalled one of a similar nature we had witnessed while in the Base Hospital at the South.

In this case it was a nurse who had left

her home in Canada and before arriving at her destination had taken pneumonia on the train and was so ill when arriving at A. had been unable to tell who she was or where she was going until papers found upon her revealed the fact that she was a nurse bound for our hospital. The two nurses detailed to bring her to the hospital found her on the third floor of a boarding house in A. and delirious with fever, the poor soul never regained consciousness but a few moments, ere she passed away among total strangers, though the hands who cared for her at the last were as kind and loving as though they had belonged to her own flesh and blood. For each one might have thought as gazing upon her lifeless form that but for I know not what intervention this one lying so still and cold might have been I.

Though all were strange to her, the fifty nurses who attended her funeral services at the undertaking parlor will scarcely ever forget the impressive and touching scene. The flag-draped casket of our sister nurse, dressed in uniform even to the little red cross cap she had never worn in life, as truly dying for her country as any brave hero upon the battle field of France, coming such a long distance to do her bit, had been called the first from our ranks to

answer the Great Roll Call above. Though no relative or friends were there to show the last loving respect, not a dry eye was present in that throng, even the kind-hearted undertaker was so touched with emotion that he wept like a father over the lonely casket.

CHAPTER XVII.

Leaving the Service

MY LAST fortnight spent in the hospital at Washington was in a ward for pneumonia. As though my life the last year had moved in a circle, I had started on December 8, in Ward 24 for pneumonia and ended my work December 8, one year later, in a ward by the same number and containing pneumonia patients, though the field of action was one thousand miles apart.

There were many sad scenes occurred during the work here, for our ward contained a great many of those patients who had survived the terrible onslaught of Flu and pneumonia which had visited the hospital with such force a few weeks previous, leaving strong men weakened and amaciated to such a degree that though we gave them the best of care that was possible under the circumstances, almost every day saw our ranks depleted until we almost despaired of saving any.

There was one bright boy in our ward who continually called me Mother in his delirium and in his rational moments used to talk of his home and mother in a most touching manner. He was an only son, college student, and used to tell the boys of the wonderful pies, mince, apple and pumpkin, he knew his mother would have prepared for him when he should be at home Christmas, that festive holiday not being far away. But his fever refused to go down and his lungs, never very strong since his long siege of Flu, were in a very bad way. I watched him closely along with the Captain of the ward, and shall never forget the last day he was in my ward. There was another ward for worse cases of pneumonia, and Manning dreaded lest he should be transferred to that ward. We still had so many cases of influenza in our ward that as a case developed pneumonia in a bad form, it was moved to the next. Manning had pleaded for me not to let them move him away from the ward, but knowing how useless it would be to request his being left, I could only pray that he would not be moved. But my heart sank upon entering the ward one morning and finding his bed empty. It lacked a little time of being 7, the time I was to report for duty, so I ran over to the ward

where he had been taken. As I walked down the long ward looking for my boy's familiar face, he spied me first, and his eyes lighted up as he exclaimed, "Oh! Miss Lee, I am so glad you have come, are you going to work in this ward now?" I hated to tell him I was not, so I said "I will come in to see you each morning and evening as I go to and from work, so cheer up and be the brave boy you have always been, and you will soon be getting well," but I fear the words sounded hollow, for I could see he was sinking fast. I told him good bye, placing a kiss upon his forehead and bade him be brave and wended my way with a sad heart, for well I knew I should see Manning no more, and my heart went out in pity to the sorrowing home somewhere in Syracuse, New York, to the mother whose boy had called so piteously for her in his delirium.

I stopped that evening as soon as my duties in the ward had ended, but it was as I had expected, Manning had gone to stand last retreat in that land where suffering is no more.

In another week the ward was pretty well thinned, those to whom the task of recovery had been too great an effort, crossing the border to join their comrades in a better land, while those for whom it

was decreed they should take up the burden of life once more were now making wonderful strides toward recovery, going as they became able to their homes for the Christmas holidays. Soon after this, upon looking at the day's buletin in the reception hall before going on duty one morning, I was gladdened to see my name with some twenty others up for release from duty. We who had been in the service for a year and over had grown weary and tired of the sad scenes of suffering and death, but had there been need for it, would have stayed on indefinitely but now new and fresh nurses were joining the Red Cross right along so as it came our turn we were very glad to be released and take up our place once more out in the world among the vast army of toilers.

So after a few days spent in transferring those patients who remained in the ward, for the hospital had thinned down so that several wards were marged into one, as their numbers grew less. Our last good byes over, there yet remained one day to be taken up undergoing sundry examinations, physical and mental, as Uncle Sam wanted to be sure we were all returning to the world at large with the same store of physical and mental ability which we possessed upon entering his service, or

if not to recompense us as best he could for our loss.

One bright morning, just one year from the day I had so enthusiastically entered the Army Nursing services at the Southern Camp Hospital, an ambulance drove up to the nurses' quarters and twenty nurses with bags in hand (our trunks having gone in another wagon) passed in line before the Chief nurse who bade us a fond farewell, good luck and best wishes upon our journey, for some were to go to homes in different parts of the country, while a few like myself, were to remain in Washington for awhile. The feeling of freedom of being our own mistress once more after being at the beck and call of Army orders, was indescribable, and only those who have ever been bound by that inexorable iron hand, be the work ever so agreeable, can understand what it meant. I flew to a haven of rest in the shape of a cozy homey little apartment in northwest Washington, for my sister and a girl from our home town had just taken a place in that location, and I was to live with them. And to say I enjoyed that Christmas in a little home of luxury, ease and comfort, is putting it mildly, for no one who has not banged about, moving from one room to another about every month, with no per-

manent place or work, living in a sort of topsy-turvy dormitory, whose days were spent in trying to console and comfort the sick and suffering and continually witnessing saddening scenes of sorrow and death for a long twelve months, I fear can not begin to realize just what the comfort and rest of a quiet home life once more did mean.

I rested for awhile and then as an epidemic of pneumonia and influenza seemed to be breaking out afresh in the city, I registered for work and have been busily caring for the sick ever since, except what time I have wished to take for recreation and rest.

"With faltering footsteps I will journey on,
Watching the stars that roll the hours away,
Till the faint light that guides me now is gone,
And, like another life, the glorious day
Shall open o'er me from the empyrean height
With warmth, and certainty, and boundless light."

Before bringing the little book to a close, I will try and answer a few of the many questions which have been asked me

concerning the hospital at Washington, the name of which I have refrained from mentioning, though I am quite sure none of my readers are at a loss to know what the name of the hospital is. My first impression upon alighting here was of a little city complete in itself. Covering about two hundred acres of ground, containing upwards of seventy five or eighty wards, at that time, with a personnel of 400 officers, twenty-five hundred patients, two hundred nurses, seventy-five reconstruction workers and about the same number of student nurses.

Having its own Post Office, Laundry, Bakery, Y. M. C. A., Recreation Buildings and Clubs.

As it is continually increasing in size and inhabitants, it is hard to give any definite statistics concerning the place. A whole city of sick and disabled menfolks, is somewhat unusual. In walking about the corridors to and from the nurses' quarters to the hospital, or about the grounds in any direction, one always met soldiers sometimes in squads, sometimes in two's and three's or one alone, walking on crutches or several in wheel chairs, with both limbs gone by the explosion of some infernal machine invented to wreck men's lives.

Many there were with one or the other sleeve hanging empty, young boyish faces, so different from those one has been accustomed to see, where the empty sleeve belonged usually to some aged veteran in a suit of blue or gray. But to see these young boys in the fresh bloom of youth come back so maimed and stricken was very touching indeed. Then to visit the wards for those poor helpless wrecks of young manhood, whose injuries are of the spine and who will never walk again, was most heart-rending.

Then others, victims of tuberculosis, contracted from exposure to cold, wet, hunger and injuries too numerous to mention while in the trenches, and worst of all, that long line of wrecked manhood suffering with diseases too horrible to contemplate, made this hospital anything but a pleasure resort, but as some of the boys said, "it was heaven compared to what they had been through."

It grieved me much to see so many of the boys total slaves to the trifling habit of cigarette smoking. This vast army of sufferers not realizing as yet the full extent of their affliction. Alas! it grieves me far more that for this curse they are forever indebted to many well meaning American citizens. For if ever a misap-

plied philanthropy was born of the lower world, that same "wolf in sheeps clothing" was the sending of cigarettes to our soldier boys.

Many a boy who had never poisoned his system by smoke before going to war, came back an abject slave to a habit, demoralizing in the extreme.

Oh! the pity of it! That our American women and girls should follow so blindly such mistaken charity. Should in thoughtlessness and ignorance send our boys that which should poison their young bodies, and ruin their souls eternally. To follow a fad, started no doubt by the unrighteous tobacco combines, to fill their own coffers at the expense of the lives and clean manhood of many of our boys. For the slave of tobacco cannot live the full rounded life a man should live before God, for it destroys the finer sensibilities of the brain, therefore rendering the user incapable of seeing truly, reasoning truly, or living truly.

It was a wholesale national wrong we perpetrated upon our boys in their helplessness, and for which God will require an answer at the judgment bar.

I am going to quote here an article on tobacco by one of the most able and Godly ministers in America today. The author is

a D.D. of National repute, editor of a Christian paper and president of one of our Christian colleges. He says:

"Statistics show that last year (1919) this country expended for tobacco $1,200,000,000. The war, among its many other evils, was a great tobacco revival. It is startling when we remind ourselves of the fact that millions of people are actually starving to death for food and the price of necessities of life are so high, that even the industrious poor must go underfed, that millions of acres of land and millions of laborers are used for the production of a poisonous weed that is neither food, clothing nor medicine, but is poison, unhealthy, uncleanly and hurtful to all things that are best.

Godly men ought not to raise tobacco, ought not to buy, sell or use it. We believe there are Christian men, many of them, mixed up and connected with the tobacco industry, but with the proper light on the subject, we believe they would turn away from it. With men who love God, trust in Jesus Christ and hope to make their home in heaven, the right or wrong of the thing must always be of first consideration. With them it must not be a question of money, but, is it right? The whole tobacco business measured by this

standard means a forks-of-the-road proposition, and the devout man must bid farewell to the dirty weed. He will see that to raise and sell an unhealthy weed which means a waste of money to him who buys it, and not only so, but a hurt to his health, and an injury to his usefulness is entirely contrary to the spirit and teachings of the Lord Jesus. The whole tobacco business, from start to finish, has its beginning and end in selfishness, world without end."

So much sorrow and suffering to the human race is entailed in a lack of proper teaching of the child in the homes all over our land. Perhaps there are those who smile derisively at the thought of a spinster giving an opinion as to how the child should be taught, but I hope to be borne out by the more broad-minded and generous of my countrymen and women in the statement that if the simple truths of the Bible were freely taught the young child along with its lessons of cleanliness and first juvenile learnings, it would give the child so taught a far more beneficial outlook upon life and help him in every way he may turn.

So many grow to manhood and womanhood without expending much thought

upon the meaning and purpose of life, (due to neglect of, or default in teaching those simple rudiments of life that Jesus taught), to the child as a rule to gauge their lives by not knowing or realizing that their own best good, as well as that of all persons with whom they come in contact with, is more or less influenced for good or evil, by their observance of, or lack of such teaching. It is a very sad truth that there are those who have not hesitated to sneer at those lowly teachings as the theme of fools, the hobby of enthusiasts, or the fanaticism of religious idiots.

You may agree with them if you like, but while I find these things treated with all soberness in the Scriptures and blessing spoken from heaven upon those who heed and obey them, I must persist in a different judgment, and ask to be excused for believing with all my heart that in this teaching we have a theme which grasps deep into everything dear to us for time and eternity.

The Bible says that "he that doeth His will shall know the truth which implies that if we **wish** to know whether these things be true, we will set about obeying them, then, the Spirit Himself will make the truth of them plain to the seeker.

May the Lord have mercy upon us and save us from the sin of unbelief.

Some may think that this old world is fast growing into the millenium. In our day especially, people are looking and laboring for a grand jubilee of nations, shaped to popular rule, and compacted by common laws, interests and creed, in which enlightened ideas shall bring about that state of perfection of government we all look forward longingly for, in which revolutions and reforms and progress of liberal ideas and overturning of old creeds for the redemption of the world without Chrst, and glorious philosophies ruling out a personal Saviour, and exalting self and passion in His place. But all their glittering ideals, of which to reconstruct society and relocate the highest interests of man, much as they may promise, and successfully as they may draw the heart and energy of the world after them, apart from faith in the blood of Christ, are but the nurslings of Satan's bosom, in which this world lies, and the inspiration of his foul breath. Dream, and prate, and preach, and glory as men may, the Bible tells us that the devil is the god and king of this world. His mantle may be often changed, and every day may exhibit a new garb, but

the presiding geniues within is still that old serpent, with all his pride and malice and falsities. And so it will go on, "wicked men and seducers waxing worse and worse," till the last trumpet sounds. Then shall come another order, not developed from below, but enforced with sudden and resistless power from above. Christ said, "My kingdom is not of this world, it cometh from above." A kingdom comes which breaks in pieces, and consumes all other kingdoms and stands forever. Having given the world six thousand years in which to choose and settle upon its proper allegiance, and finding after all only an intenser and more malignant apostasy among the majority of worldings, He causes the final trumpet to sound, breaks in with His Almightiness, and enforces His rightful dominion. When that day comes it shall find wickedness and iniquity ripened to the full. But when the seventh trumpet sounds it will forever put an end to all infamous, unrighteousness of men, and the maddened nations shall suddenly be dashed to atoms, as a vessel of pottery struck with a rod of iron. O! glorious riddance of our weary world, when "the Son of Man shall send forth His angels, and they shall gather out of His kingdom all things that

offend, and them which do iniquity." Well, may the enthroned Elders fall on their faces and cry their thanks to the Lord Almighty for it. Another item in the schedule of the last trumpet is, that the dead are to be judged then. When men die and their bodies waste in the ground, it is not the end of them. Whatever may be their state meanwhile, they reappear again. The holy Apostle John sees them, the small and the great, all standing before the great white throne, to be judged, every one of them, according to their works.

There is to be a resurrection, even, of the wicked. Some may think this a weird and doleful subject to introduce into my story, but as the book of Truth tells us that such are the state of things, which are to come to pass, I am of the opinion that it were far better to think upon them occasionally, and look them squarely in the face, and try to be prepared for such a time, than to foolishly put them aside, afraid to look into them, and let that day come upon us unawares. It would, in my mind, be equal to the folly of a passenger upon an ocean liner, learning that the vessel was sinking, to get into a frenzy because some one had spoken of so dismal a

subject, and declaim that he would rather not be bothered about such things. No, my friends. Not one of all who have ever lived upon this earth can escape that day and time. They that put an end to their existence on earth, resolving not to live any more, must still live, and take the sentence of Heaven for all their deeds. This side the grave, full justice is never done, and up to that great day, no one receives entirely all his deserts. That is reserved for the period of resurrection. Many a great criminal dies without having had his guilt so much as known, whilst perchance, innocent ones have had to suffer for his sins. The wicked go unpunished, are even honored sometimes in their crimes, and pass away with no experiences to mark how they stand in the estimate of God. Fortunes are made, and enjoyed, and respected, and their holders held in favorable esteem to the end of their days, every dime of which is stained and corroded with crime, and marked with fraud, oppression and deeds of injustice. So marked and constant are the inequalities that occur, that even the holiest of persons have often been tempted to despondency whether their faith and godliness are not after all a mistake. Nor is their

at times any adequate justification for their course but in the fact that the end of the matter is not in this world. Beyond is the theatre on which final settlement is to be made, there shall all earth's wrongs be righted, all present inequalities adjusted and the administrations of God forever vindicated. The dead have not gone beyond His reach. The grave does not cover them from His sight nor bar them from His power. Having escaped unpunished from this world, their just portion still awaits them in the next. People may call it fable, and dream, and reason it away as impossible, but that will not alter it. And when the seventh angel sounds, there will be exultant thanksgivings in heaven, that "the time of the dead to be judged" is come. While the Lord keeps those happy here who serve Him, no Christian looks for his compensation in this world. "For if in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are most miserable," said Paul. Piety may not always pay as regards this world, but it will pay then. Not even the gift of a cup of water to the thirsty in His name, shall then go unrewarded, not a loss, or pain, or labor of love, or a tear of sorrow, incurred for Jesus or His Truth's sake, shall fail of its

just recompense. Rewards for all who hold steadfast, and suffer aught in Jesus name and for all that fear God small and great are in reserve. Jesus has gone to make them ready. Faith sees them there, and waits for them with eager hope. And when the last trumpet sounds, they shall be given. Then shall Paul get his "crown of righteousness," and all the Apostles take their everlasting thrones. Then shall Moses possess the recompense to which he had respect, when he chose rather "to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season." And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife or children or lands for the sake of God and His Christ, shall receive a hundred fold, and shall inherit everlasting life. No wonder then that the blessed Elders fall on their faces before God and praise and thank Him with profoundest song, when the signal for so glorious a consummation sounds. Nor is all this without the most intent moment to us. We are all concerned with that last trumpet's sound. Our eternal interests are wrapped up in what it is to bring. Big is it with the doom and destiny of every one, and everything that is. Be our place, our

occupation what it may, our fate and lot, and every question, every doubt, shall then come to final settlement. Near or remote as those scenes may be we shall all be in them, and take from these the character of our forever. Believe it or not, we every one shall be there; there as victims of the great day of Almighty wrath, as prisoners brought forth for final execution, or, as the friends and servants of Jesus, to be confessed, rewarded, and glorified by our blessed Lord. And as we spend these swift-passing days, and conduct ourselves in this brief life, will be the character of our portion then. Building on Jesus in humble faith and lowly steadfastness, we are safe, and our work is safe. Then may we rejoice, and be exceedingly glad, for great is the reward that we shall get. Otherwise there is no dreader sound than that of the last trumpet. And when we think of the millions of dead and living for whom it has no blessing, and of the utter destruction which it shall bring on them that know not God, and obey not the Gospel, is there not a reason for us all to be moved with fear, lest that day should come upon us unawares? It will be too late then to remedy present mistakes, negligences and omissions. If we are to meet

that day with joy, and escape the horrors it brings to the unprepared, we must be getting ready now, getting ready by honest repentance of our sins, joining ourselves to Christ, and His people, and with all our heart and energy seeking to be in accord with His word and will. Happy they who, when the last trumpet sounds, shall be found in such a case!

"Jesus, do thou mine eyes unseal,
And let them grow,
Quick to discern whate'er Thou dost reveal.
So shall I be delivered from that woe,
Blindly to stray
Through hopeless night, while all around is day."

I am indebted to a number of authors whose quotations I have used freely throughout this little book, believing that if a thing is worth writing once, it will bear to be repeated, properly punctuated, showing that it originated elsewhere.

For a gem of truth, like the loaves and fishes, can be fed to the multitude, and still remain to feed multitudes more, and regardless of having been read and reread, is ever new and profitable reading.

Since this little bit of narrations has

been finished, I hesitate, and wonder if it is worth while troubling the publishers with it, but hoping some may find amusement or profit from its pages, I send it on, and though it started with a State Capital and ended in the Nation's Capital, I can scarcely hope for such a wide scope for its travels.

Go, little book, and if you can,
Win some one to think and plan
For a higher life and better place,
Than this old world, so war effaced.
And if that soul should gain a home
Within the portals ne'er to roam,
With all its treasures to imburse
I hope he'll meet this Red Cross Nurse.

(The End)

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